



COLUMBIA
JOURNALISM
REVIEW

MAY/JUNE 1997
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FALLOUT
FROM THE
DETROIT STRIKE



Broadcaster
BROKAW
GOES FOR 'YOU NEWS'

CEO
SCARDINO
SHOCKS THE BRITS



Sports Columnist
WHITLOCK
SCORES IN KANSAS CITY



Editor
HAMILL
WAKES UP THE DAILY NEWS



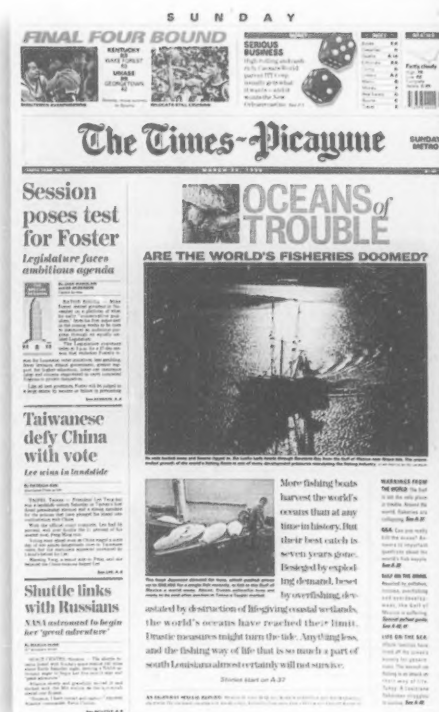
The Times-Picayune

TEAMING WITH



IT TOOK FIFTEEN JOURNALISTS one year to create the blend of

reporting, writing, photography, editing and graphic artistry that made "Oceans of Trouble: Are the World's Fisheries Doomed?" the winner of the 1997 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service.



FRONT ROW FROM LEFT: Mark Schleifstein, reporter; Kenneth Harrison, artist; Dinah Rogers, assistant photo editor; Angela Hill, artist; Tim Morris, project editor; George Berke, design director; John McQuaid, reporter; and Doug Parker, photo editor.
BACK ROW, FROM LEFT: Ted Jackson, photographer; Bob Marshall, reporter; James O'Byrne, Sunday editor; Mark Dooley, copy editor; and Emmett Mayer III, artist.
NOT PICTURED: Erica Bynum, artist and Paul Freesty, graphics editor.



TALENT. . .

IT TAKES INDIVIDUAL BRILLIANCE every day to produce cartoons with the bite that draws smiles or scowls from newspaper readers. This year's winner of the 1997 Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Cartooning, Walt Handelsman, has what it takes.

DIFFERENT APPROACHES, DIFFERENT KINDS OF JOURNALISM, ONE TEAM. Congratulations to all our Pulitzer Prize winners!



WALT HANDELSMAN
Editorial cartoonist

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**Everyday, irregardless of his homework,
Jeffrey went "rollerblading" because it
was to nice to lay around with his nose
in a english book.**

Of the 7 errors in this headline, "rollerblading" as a verb strikes us as most extreme. Other common misuses of the Rollerblade brand name include "rollerblades, rollerbladers, blades, bladers and blading." Remember, the careful writer skates on in-line skates known as Rollerblade® skates.



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Publisher's Note

by Joan Konner

The Truth About Lying

The judgment of fraud against ABC News in the Food Lion case has led to a great deal of discussion in journalism circles about investigative techniques of journalism in particular and the declining credibility of the press in general. As the jury foreman in the case commented: "Of course we want the news organizations to bring us the news. But it's like football. There are boundaries, and this time they went out of bounds." In other words, journalists are not above the law.

The Food Lion decision and others against the news media in recent court cases constitute a serious warning. The public has been telling journalism to do something to control itself or others will do it for us. The medical profession faced a parallel public challenge — about the quality of medical care and its cost. When doctors did not heed public concern, first came the malpractice suits and now, a revolution in medical care produced by outside pressures.

The ethical, legal, and practical questions raised by the Food Lion case and others were discussed February 19 at the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism's "First Amendment Leaders' Breakfast." Here's an excerpt from remarks by Sissela Bok, chair of the Pulitzer Prize board, philosopher, and author of several books, including Lying.

I am often called these days by reporters and others who are concerned with the many examples of lying in the news. They ask: Don't we have much more lying than ever, if you think of government, of politics, of the media, of Wall Street, and business? Have we ever had a time like this before? Don't we live in a culture of lying?

This is very hard to weigh. I don't think we can tell right now what lies may, in fact, be going on that are "successful" in that they haven't been uncovered. But also memories are very short. I wrote the book *Lying* in the aftermath of Watergate and Vietnam. It would take a lot to surpass the intricate webs of lies and secrecy that we associate with these names.

Then as now, in many professions, there were people who said that while honesty is indeed the best policy, we in our profession unfortunately have to have some exceptions made for ourselves, for the good of society, or for the good of people that we lie to. For instance, if we're doctors lying to people with cancer. There was also an argument that certain people were special in that you might lie to them, unlike others: sick people, the mentally ill, children, enemies, wrongdoers. They are special. So, you are special because of your profession, and they are special as appropriate recipients of lies.

Then as now, there was a common failure to reason through questions of lying. There was a kind of tunnel vision, taking one case after another and saying, Okay, in this case, is it really so bad to use a little lying for this particular greater good? And there was utter blindness at the time, and I still think there often is, to the cumulative impact of all the decisions to which these self-proclaimed good people with good reasons to lie were contributing.

Also, and even more serious from a personal point of view, there is an utter blindness to the effects on the person who's doing the lying, on that person's character, on that person's self-respect, as somebody who is worthy of trust.

Those are things that are the same. But there are also differences that I see between the 1970s and now. First, we are on the receiving end of a great deal more lying, whether or not the per capita lying has gone up among those who carry it out. And in part, we're on the receiving end because of very flamboyant examples of people I couldn't even have invented when I wrote my book.

Practices of lying are also more out in the open today, often defended as natural, beneficial, at times, necessary. Increasingly sophisticated technological support and coordination are available to those engaging, for example, in deceptive fund-raising or political campaigning. In journalism, similar approaches are sometimes undertaken by reporters aiming to expose fraud and wrongdoing. Some news organizations then provide reporters willing to go undercover with false résumés, third parties who supply fabricated references, and any technological or other aids to facilitate their tasks.

My view is that there's greater reason than ever for all of us to lean over backwards, to be concerned not to add to the pollution of the social atmosphere in which we all have to live. Because I think it's true that for anyone, and certainly a reporter who is found to lie and cheat as a practice, there's always a nugget of doubt. The next time we see that person on television, or read that person's column, how do we know that he or she is telling us the truth?

When journalists consider possible exceptions to the basic standards of honesty and commitment to truth that the best reporting demands, they might begin by asking to what extent there is a clear and present danger that seems to require them to violate those standards. And then ask to what extent it's really true that there are no alternative means of responding to that danger, save through such a violation. ♦

Letters

GRAVE MISTAKES

Larry Grossman was dead wrong in his *Critic at Large* piece ("To Err Is Human, to Admit It Divine," *CJR*, March/April) when he referred to me as "the late Bill Monroe." I know because I discover myself frequently walking the Appalachian Trail, tending a five-day-per-week job and, best of all, enjoying life with my trophy wife (of fifty-five years' standing).

If I had been writing about Larry, even though I am aware of his antiquity and haven't heard of him in years, I wouldn't call him "the late." I would refer to him as "the recent Larry Grossman." That concedes a bit of ambiguity. It lets the reader know you have a strong hunch the fellow is toes up by now but, just for the record, he was, in fact, living last you heard of him.

As Larry writes, in the early '80s when he was president of NBC News and I suggested to him that we try an experimental "letter to the editor" segment on the *Today* show, I appreciated his backing. Those five-minute inserts produced some lively television. Here was a Philadelphia secretary at her desk in a twenty-second sound bite skewering Tom Brokaw for a phrase she thought was sexist. Here was a used-car dealer on his lot in North Carolina disagreeing with the economic reporting of Mike Jensen. And now a birdwatcher accusing the *Today* show of adding the sound of an eastern bird to a moody visual essay on a western forest. (He was absolutely right. A film director had thrown in an alien bird song for effect, thinking nobody would know the difference.)

But the network correspondents, who, unlike newspaper writers, are shielded from public criticism, detested plain people criticizing them. The *Today* producer back then, whose goal in life was to keep his "talent" happy, kept squeezing the segments out of the schedule. And, unfortunately, as you can read between the lines of his column, Larry Grossman was no different from most network news presidents in that he couldn't control the top producers and correspondents.

I still think a venturesome network would do well to get into a regular let's-

hear-it-from-the-viewers operation. We proved, I think, that it can be done economically, that it can add zest to news programming, improve the news organization's credibility and human image, and subject some of the on-air princes and princesses to discipline they would benefit from — the same kind of fair-play audience feedback that adds democratic strength to every American newspaper, but with real people on screen and television production values.

BILL MONROE
Bethesda, Maryland

FOOD LION FALLOUT

A Laurel for your "Punishing the Press" issue (*CJR*, March/April) but I hope you will now examine a possibly dangerous effect of the ABC-Food Lion case and similar ones: new limits on the news media's ability to cover private enterprise.

These new limits come just as conglomerates and other corporations add steadily to their economic and political power over America and Americans, and at a time when the news media need to cover them more closely than ever. If the courts and elected officials in thrall to the big firms can chill such coverage before it even begins, we could end up getting much of our news about the economy from corporate handouts and company propaganda films.

HERBERT J. GANS
Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology
Columbia University
New York, New York

ADVANCING THE STORY

I was perplexed and distressed to read your item concerning Reynolds Holding's story in the *San Francisco Chronicle* about the abuses committed by prison guards at Corcoran State Prison — specifically your comment that Holding's story "disclosed details documented two months earlier by Mark Arax of the *Los Angeles Times*" (*Darts & Laurels*, *CJR*, March/April).

This is true in the sense that the basic facts about the inmate deaths at Corcoran were reported in the *Times* before Holding's story. It is worth noting that

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Arax was hardly alone in reporting the inmate deaths at Corcoran; CNN and *The Orange County Register* reported the incidents as well. The fifth paragraph of Holding's story acknowledged the earlier news reports, and indicated how we intended to advance the story.

Through the use of corrections department records and court documents that did not even exist at the time Arax or the other media worked on their stories and which were obtained exclusively by the *Chronicle*, Holding developed far more incriminating details about the corrections department's attempt to thwart a federal investigation of abuses at the prison; and, most important, established that prison officials were citing rising inmate violence in their requests for more money for guards and prisons at the same time the guards were systematically inciting increased violence among the inmates. Arax and the other media made no mention of any possible motive for the violence.

KEN CONNER
Assistant city editor
San Francisco Chronicle
San Francisco, California

FLAWED ALLIANCE?

After reading in Peter Kornbluh's critique in the January/February issue that there were "significant flaws" in my series about the connections between Nicaraguan drug dealers and the CIA, "Dark Alliance," I kept waiting for an example. I'm still waiting. What he cites as flaws are not.

Does anyone deny that these contras, Norwin Meneses and Danilo Blandon, sold quantities of cocaine to the gangs in South Central Los Angeles? Hardly. The fuss is partly over the sellers' job titles. I called them civilian leaders of the Nicaraguan Democratic Front (FDN) in California, a label Kornbluh claims I used "without supporting evidence."

But my series quoted Blandon's contradicted testimony as a U.S. government witness that he and five other men set up the FDN's support network in L.A., that he'd been working for the contras since July 1979, and that he had helped start and finance the movement. I also quoted from his 1994 pre-sentence interview with the U.S. Probation and Parole Commission in which he detailed his long association with the contras. Also, Blandon's boss, Meneses, told me of his and Blandon's connections to the FDN. All of that was reported.

Another "flaw" is related to how long Blandon sent drug money to the contras — Kornbluh pointed to testimony from

Blandon that indicated it was limited to the beginning of the 1980s. I will just point out that contra leader Eden Pastora told the Senate Intelligence Committee recently that Blandon didn't start giving him money, trucks, and free housing until 1985. FBI, DEA, and L.A. county sheriff's records all say Blandon's drug ring was funding the contras as late as October 1986.

The argument is also over the length of time these men sold the cocaine in L.A. and the amount of money they raised. The *Los Angeles Times's* nameless sources say Blandon sent less than \$50,000 and Kornbluh repeats that. But I didn't care how little Blandon had contributed to the contras. My stories were about the drug money he admitted delivering to Meneses for the FDN. When you look at that cash, the sums are obvious. Blandon told a federal grand jury in 1994 that he sold between 200 and 300 kilos of cocaine for Meneses in L.A. In court, Blandon swore that all the profits from that cocaine went to the contras, and said he was selling it for \$60,000 a kilo. The transcripts are posted on our website (<http://www.sjmercury.com/drugs/>).

Some might call it an extrapolation to describe \$12 million to \$18 million as "millions." I call it math.

GARY WEBB
San Jose Mercury News
Sacramento, California

Peter Kornbluh replies: *Despite his "groundbreaking and dramatic story," as my article in CJR credited Gary Webb's reporting, there were indeed many flaws in the "Dark Alliance" series. Webb's math, for example, shows that he can add, but not subtract. His "\$12 million to \$18 million" figure fails to deduct the overhead of the drug operations to the traffickers. (In the court transcript that Webb refers to, Danilo Blandon testifies to how little profit he made in the period he was supporting the contras, due to expenditures for safehouses, cars, trucks, and the drugs themselves.)*

The controversy over how much drug money went to the contras is linked to the length of time Blandon actually aided them. Webb's decision to omit testimony by Blandon limiting how long he actually gave drug monies to the contras — because those statements undermined the thrust of the articles — is another flaw. Instead of reporting the evidence, with all its contradictions, Webb selected what was useful to his blockbuster assertions.

His penchant for overstating the weight of the evidence is another flaw. His letter, for example, states that "FBI, DEA, and L.A. county sheriff's records all say" that drug funds were going to the contras until 1986.

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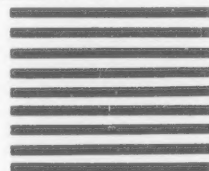
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Celebration!



The Associated Press has good reason to celebrate.

The AP won the 1997 Pulitzer Prize for feature photography, the cooperative's 43rd and 25th for photos, the most Pulitzers for photography of any news organization. It's also the AP's sixth Pulitzer for photography in seven years.

Alexander Zemlianichenko's photo of Russian President Boris Yeltsin dancing at a rock concert was taken in Rostov, Russia, during Yeltsin's re-election campaign.

It's the second Pulitzer for the Moscow-based Zemlianichenko, who, along with four of his AP colleagues, won the Pulitzer in 1992 for a series of pictures on the 1991 attempted coup during the waning days of the Soviet Union. He was also a finalist in 1996.

Congratulations to Alexander Zemlianichenko, winner of the 1997 Pulitzer Prize and to AP Southwest Regional Reporter Julia Prodis, a finalist for a trio of enterprise stories.



AP Associated Press

The Rosalynn Carter Fellowships for Mental Health Journalism

The Mental Health Program of The Carter Center in Atlanta, Georgia, announces one-year journalism fellowships. Designed to enhance public understanding of mental health issues and combat stigma and discrimination against people with mental illness, the fellowships begin in September 1997.

- The program is open to print and broadcast journalists with a minimum of two years of professional experience.
- Each fellow will be awarded a \$10,000 grant and two expense-paid trips to The Carter Center to meet with program staff and advisors.
- Projects will be tailored to the experience and interests of the fellows, who will consult with the program's distinguished advisory board.
- Fellows will not be required to leave their current employment.

"This program is an exciting component of our efforts to reduce stigma and discrimination against those with mental illness. I look forward to working with each of our fellows to promote awareness of these important issues."

—Rosalynn Carter

The 1997 application deadline is June 16. To apply, write or e-mail:

THE
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John Gates, Ph.D., Director
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But his articles do not cite any FBI or DEA documents that actually provide concrete evidence to support that claim. The series does quote two L.A. sheriff's department search warrants, which record the claims of two unidentified associates of Blandon's. These constitute important pieces of evidence; they do not provide conclusive proof to support Webb's sweeping conclusions.

The most significant flaws in the articles have to do with the repeated suggestions, without supporting documentation of any kind, that the CIA knew about, and was involved in, these drug operations. To be sure, Webb's reporting credibly established the "dark alliance" between contra supporters and crack. What remains unproven is the allegation of a darker alliance with the CIA, the charge that triggered the public furor over his controversial series.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Maggie Balough, former editor of the *Austin American-Statesman*, takes issue with a number of points regarding Joe Holley's story about the performance of her successor, Rich Oppel ("Old Values, New Life," *CJR*, January/February). Among them:

- Holley reported that in the past year, the newspaper's daily circulation increased 2 percent under Oppel. Balough, who was editor until February 14, 1995, notes that for the six months through March 31, 1995, its daily circulation rose 2.5 percent.

- Balough says that "employment of minority professionals hovered around 20 percent during much of my tenure," and she questioned Oppel's record when he was editor of *The Charlotte Observer* from November 1978 through July 1993. Holley quoted Oppel as saying: "In Charlotte, we had 50 percent men, 50 percent women and 25 percent minorities." *CJR* erred. "I may have misspoken," says Oppel, but those figures were for Knight-Ridder's Washington bureau when he was its chief from August 1993 through June 1995.

- Balough says that "At least twice during my tenure as editor, Joe Holley expressed interest, once directly applying and once through a friend, in working for the newspaper. I made the decision not to hire Holley." Holley responds that he wrote to Balough about an editorial-writing position on December 8, 1993, but never received an answer; and that at the request of the editorial-page editor some time in 1994, he dropped off some clips, and the paper hired someone else. Holley informed Oppel of this before his first interview for *CJR*'s story. Says Holley: "I told Oppel that in choosing to do this story, I waived any interest in working for the *American-Statesman*."

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Q & A

ABORTION: PARTIAL TRUTHS

Covering the passionately charged issue of abortion always tests the press. In the latest facet of the debate — which began in June 1995, when anti-abortion members of Congress introduced a bill to ban what they call the “partial birth” abortion procedure — the press came up short. Now that the bill has begun a second journey toward President Clinton’s desk (he vetoed it in April 1996) the media are getting a second chance.

Some doctors contend a ban would not reduce the number of abortions, only restrict the method. Still, in terms of strategy, the bill is formidable. It turns the spotlight away from the rights of women over their bodies and futures and onto the realities of a procedure used to terminate a fetus at a point when it looks like a baby. In terms of law, the ban’s backers fashioned it to prohibit this method at any point in a pregnancy — thus potentially tunneling under the protective wall of *Roe v. Wade*. That decision allows states to restrict abortions only after a fetus could survive outside the womb, a point that is debated but is thought to occur between twenty-four and twenty-eight weeks.

Some context: U.S. doctors perform roughly 1.4 million abortions a year. Of



Reporter Ruth Padawer

those, only 1 percent, some 14,000, are done after twenty weeks of pregnancy. That’s when this procedure — “intact dilation and extraction” or D&X, as providers usually call it — sometimes is used. In D&X, the fetus is pulled part-way into the birth canal, where the contents of its head are suctioned out so it can be pulled out the rest of the way.

Partisans on both sides of the abortion divide have distorted the facts about how many women get such abortions, and why. Some anti-abortion advocates suggested that it is regularly used in the third trimester, after twenty-six weeks. Yet neutral experts estimate only some 320 abortions a year of any kind are performed in the U.S. after twenty-six weeks.

Abortion-rights leaders, on the other hand, insisted that the procedure is per-

formed quite rarely and only when the fetus is badly deformed or the mother’s health is in danger. It was this line that Clinton followed in vetoing the bill. In fact, the evidence indicates that the procedure is not so rare and is most often used on healthy mothers with healthy fetuses. Partly because such distortions were left standing, a straightforward debate about this procedure, and about late abortion, was never fully joined.

Where was the press? At best, most of the media reported the two sides’ widely divergent “facts” without trying to determine what was true. At worst, important voices — including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and National Public Radio — simply repeated the abortion-rights advocates’ version, without attribution, in news stories.

There were exceptions. One was Diane Gianelli of *American Medical News*, an AMA weekly. Her reporting on abortion is a journalistic gold standard. David Brown, a physician, sorted through some of the confusion in *The Washington Post* last September.

The first mainstream reporter to investigate some of the distortions, also last September, was Ruth Padawer, thirty-five, of *The Record*, in Bergen County, New Jersey. She covers a “gender and society” beat she created four years ago. Following is an interview with Padawer.

Mike Hoyt

SARA BARRETT

Q: How did your story on this debate get started?

A: The religion writer said, "I need a sentence or two to throw in just to explain what this debate is about." And I said, "I'll get back to you in a couple of hours." So I called various people on various sides of the issue, expecting to get different views about the merits of the D&X procedure, but I was overwhelmed by how different each side's take was on the very facts — how often it occurred, when it occurred, why it occurred, the circumstances under which it occurred. I was very confused and motivated to find out more.

Q: Where did you start?

A: Because the governor [Christie Whitman] had said the procedure wasn't done in this state, I called a clinic in Englewood, New Jersey, just hoping they would know people in Manhattan who did it. I talked to one doctor who said that he didn't do it but that he knew of some people who did, and he'd get back to me. While I was waiting, I called another physician there who said, "I do them."

Q: Same clinic?

A: Same clinic. He told me he did it and all of his buddies did it — including the first doctor I had talked to. So I was taken aback. This doctor gave me all the details, the circumstances under which he did it. Like everybody else I talked to afterwards, he said it was the procedure that he preferred and the procedure he would try first. In about half the cases, he was able to use it. He said it was quicker and safer for the woman, because it avoided going in with sharp instruments and poking around. He estimated that the clinic annually performed 3,000 to 5,000 late abortions — after twenty weeks and no later than twenty-four weeks — and that about half of those involved this D&X procedure.

Q: You talked to others?

A: I spoke to a high-level administrator there who was a physician also, and he answered the same way. His estimate was 3,000 abortions, half of them using this method. I talked to another doctor outside of New Jersey. They all had the same assessment of the women who wind up getting abortions beyond twenty weeks — they are teenagers, people who are poor, people who have a lot of chaos in their lives.

Q: Your significant findings were . . . ?

A: That these men were telling me that their clinic alone did at least 1,500 of these procedures a year. The pro-choice side was saying that only 500 were done nationwide. The second thing was that the pro-choice side was saying that the procedure was used only, or almost only, in the most dire medical circumstances, but the providers I spoke to in

and outside of New Jersey all agreed that such cases were a small minority.

Q: Your story came out on September 15, 1996. What was the reaction?

A: Initially none. Two days later, *The Washington Post* ran [Brown's] story, and four days later a *New York Times* story referred to both. Then the pro-lifers jumped all over my story and Xeroxed it and passed it all over the place. Quietly the pro-choice movement was criticizing it.

Q: So, you found yourself elevated by one side and attacked by the other. How did you feel at this point?

A: Frustrated and angry. I felt very uncomfortable being used by one side. I understood why they did what they did, but nevertheless, I felt very uncomfortable. As for my treatment by the other [abortion-rights] side, I felt really angry, too, because I knew that I was telling the truth and they were telling anybody who would listen that I wasn't.

Q: Your story was the first real reporting in the mainstream press about who gets this procedure and why. Yet even your story came some fifteen months after the bill had been introduced. Isn't it strange that it took so long for journalists to go talk to doctors?

A: Yes. When something comes across one's desk where the claims and facts are so contradictory, you have to look into it. This experience has made me question everything that comes past my desk. *Everything*. Not just about abortion, but any claim at all.

Q: Is bias a part of what's going on here? Let me quote Karen Tumulty of *Time*: "By and large, journalists have been far more willing to accept what facts and figures and examples are brought to them by the abortion-rights side and discount the other side's argument." Jonathan Alter of *Newsweek* said something very similar [both on PBS's *Media Matters*].

A: I don't feel comfortable interpreting why other reporters did what they did, but it certainly seems possible that unconsciously people were influenced by their politics.

Q: Then came the Ron Fitzsimmons "I lied" story. [Fitzsimmons, executive director of the National Coalition of Abortion Providers, told *Gianelli of American Medical News* in February that — because he had researched it — he knew that most D&X abortions are performed on healthy fetuses in healthy mothers, even though he and other pro-choice leaders had said otherwise.] How did you follow up on that?

A: I started out by going to people in his own organization. Their president forcefully defended him and defended his coming clean. Like Fitzsimmons, she defended the

procedure, and said it was important that it be protected. And I spoke to other people — providers, clinic administrators, lower-level activists. A lot of them not only agreed with what Fitzsimmons said, but supported his guts in coming forward. Because, for them, saying that this procedure was used only in these dreadful cases was a betrayal of the people who they mostly serve — people who were healthy, who had healthy fetuses, and who had a whole bunch of other reasons for having abortions.

Q: In other words, they thought that there had been a false debate?

A: Yes, and they felt frustrated. A lot of clinic administrators and abortion providers wish that, beyond these so-called partial-birth abortions, there was a more frank discussion about what actually happens in an abortion and, at the same time, about what brings women to clinics. They see more complexity than the public debate ever really reveals.

Q: Is it part of the press's role to facilitate a straightforward debate?

Absolutely. First, by getting the facts right. But the harder part is exploring the social circumstances of abortion. For example, about half of all U.S. pregnancies are unintended, and half of those unintended pregnancies end in abortion. That's ripe ground for journalists to explore, why those numbers are what they are.

LANGUAGE CORNER

SOME THINGS JUST HAPPEN

"He was supposed to back up Barton," the story said, "but early in camp Foels asked him to be a floater and learn all three positions. That proved fortuitous when Thomas was injured — White stepped in and filled the hole." The clear implication is that White's learning three positions was a lucky or fortunate thing, but that isn't what "fortuitous" means. It means happening by chance. White's extra training didn't just happen; it was planned. And what happens fortuitously can turn out to be good or bad. The word used the right way can mean, for example, things stumbled upon: "Fortuitous products of poverty, such as lard-can trash receptacles and peach-basket hampers, can be the stuff that magazine layouts are made of." Happy happenstance. But the junk that's grist for the layout artist's mill might be a pain in the neck for a landscape painter, and it would still be just as fortuitous.

Evan Jenkins

For more on the language, see *CJR's* website at <http://www.cjr.org>.

NEWSPAPERS

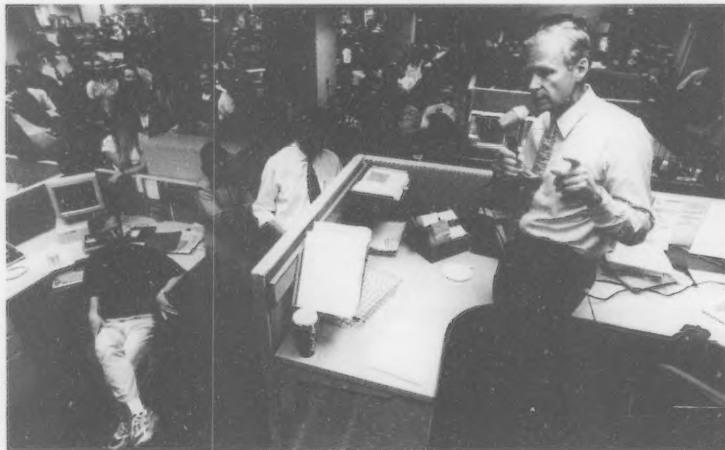
VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FOR DAILIES

“We love newspapers. We think they have a great future.” So said a happy c.e.o., Tony Ridder, to about a hundred rather relieved staff members gathered in the newsroom of *The Kansas City Star* in April. His Miami-based Knight-Ridder, Inc. had just agreed to pay \$1.65 million to buy the *Star* and three other well-performing papers — the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*; the Belleville, Illinois, *News-Democrat*; and the Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, *Times Leader* — from The Walt Disney Company.

Disney's surprise announcement in January that it was selling off the papers, which it had acquired when it bought Capital Cities/ABC, had seemed distur-

ber of newspaper outfits expressed deep interest and came to the bidding with deep pockets — including Times-Mirror Co., Tribune Co., Hearst Corp., and Conrad Black's Toronto-based Hollinger Inc. “They're asking a lot of money,” said a Hollinger executive, Jerry Strader, of the four papers. “They're worth a lot of money, and we bid a lot of money.”

But not enough. Presuming the deal is completed on schedule, sixty days from the announcement, Knight-Ridder will take charge. The deal is part of the strategy of Tony Ridder, who spent a total of twenty-two years at the *San Jose Mercury News*, a few of them as a reporter, before entering corporate management in 1986. He became c.e.o. in 1995. Knight-Ridder intends to refocus on newspapers; it already has thirty-one, from *The Miami Herald* to *The Wichita Eagle*. Now it plans to sell off Knight-Ridder Information, Inc., an online service used mainly for business, to help pay for the acquisition from Disney. Ridder said he didn't anticipate any management changes. But lately he has cut costs at some of the company's



Tony Ridder speaks with *Kansas City Star* staff after announcing big purchase.

ing. If prime dailies like the *Star* and *Star-Telegram*, whose 25-percent operating profit margins far exceed industry averages, could be sold off like boxed fruit, what did that portend for the future value of, and faith in, newspapers?

As prized as these monopoly newspapers are, their profits weren't growing fast enough to suit Disney, which is accustomed to its entertainment-based earnings increasing at a supercharged rate of 20 percent. Fortunately, a large num-

ber of newspaper outfits expressed deep interest and came to the bidding with deep pockets — including Times-Mirror Co., Tribune Co., Hearst Corp., and Conrad Black's Toronto-based Hollinger Inc. “They're asking a lot of money,” said a Hollinger executive, Jerry Strader, of the four papers. “They're worth a lot of money, and we bid a lot of money.”

“This is a first-rate outcome,” says Arthur Brisbane, the *Star*'s editor. “I was pretty worried we'd end up with one of those shark outfits. It's happened in other places.”

He didn't say which or where.

Paul Wenske

Wenske is editor of the Kansas City Business Journal.

INVESTIGATIONS

THE STORY THAT OPENED A PRISON GATE

Finally, after four years and nearly thirty broadcast reports, Boston television reporter Dan Rea was not the only journalist dogging the story. On a chilly morning this March, twelve cameras stood side by side in the parking lot of a Massachusetts prison, awaiting Joe Salvati. At sixty-three, Salvati was about to walk out after serving thirty years of a life sentence for his conviction in an organized-crime murder.

Back in 1967 Salvati, from Boston's North End, had said that he couldn't remember where he had been the night Edward “Teddy” Deegan was murdered two years earlier. But he said he was innocent, and Rea, forty-eight, a lawyer and an award-winning reporter, believed him. “I put my career on the line,” Rea says.

Rea's pit-bull grip and extensive reporting on the story since May 1993 led to Governor William Weld's recommendation last December that Salvati's sentence be commuted. Before that, Rea had little competition from his colleagues in the media. In 1994, a long *Boston Globe* feature questioned Rea's relentless pursuit of his “mission impossible.” The article came after the district attorney sent a scathing letter to WBZ-TV, Rea's employer, accusing him of irresponsible advocacy journalism.

Rea's first report on Salvati aired on May 17, 1993. In a dingy alley in Chelsea, a town just north of Boston, Rea recounted the bare facts: in 1965 there was a mafia hit “right here in this Chelsea alley.” In 1967, Rea reported, a notorious killer and loan shark named Joe “The Animal” Barboza entered the Federal Witness Protection Program and confessed to having engineered the Deegan murder with several criminal accomplices. His testimony convicted Salvati, who owed money to Barboza, and five other men.

Rea came to the story when he met



Rea interviews Salvati, flanked by his wife, Marie, and his lawyer, Victor Garo, outside Bay State Correctional Center.

the front burner both for the public and the government," she adds. "Dan's a pro, he doesn't have an ax to grind."

On February 5, the Governor's Council voted unanimously for commutation (which does not erase the conviction, but allows release on parole). Salvati was released on the morning of March 20.

Dominating Dan Rea's evening reports was a tape of Salvati happily walking through the old

neighborhood and getting a haircut, a free man.

Ron LaBrecque

LaBrecque is a former reporter for The Miami Herald and Newsweek.

ELECTRONIC RIGHTS WHO OWNS THAT ONLINE STORY?

There are pluses to being a freelance writer: no commute, no boss, and no sticky office politics or stale office coffee. But there are also minuses: no paid vacation days, health-care coverage, or 401(k) plans. Free-lancing can be a tough way to pay the mortgage and clothe the kids. And, as *The Boston Globe's* new contract makes clear, it's not getting any easier in the age of the Internet.

At least the contract is to the point: it's just three short sentences, concluding with the unequivocal "*The Boston Globe* shall own all rights, including copyright, in your articles and may reuse them with no additional payment being made to you." Period. Oh, and, "Very truly yours, *Globe Newspaper Company*."

This kind of contract isn't new, but it's part of a new chapter in the saga of free-lancer versus publisher in the electronic age. Even though no real fortunes are being made through Internet journalism yet, the battle is, at its heart,

about money — who's going to get it someday and who's going to be left in the cold. Some Boston free-lancers are fighting back, trying to keep a foot inside the door to future profits.

In December, almost 2,000 free-lance writers, regular and one-time contributors (including this writer) alike, received the *Globe* contract with their holiday mail. More than 200 writers quickly united into the Boston *Globe* Freelancers Association to protest, as they put it, this "attempted seizure of all rights." They've asked management to withdraw its demands and offer some compensation for putting their work online, and to discuss the issue in a meeting with members of the association — to no avail.

The *Globe* claimed that 700 writers had signed the contract by the end of March; the free-lancers believe that few of those were professional writers.

Some publications — like Time Warner's *Cooking Light* and American Express's *Travel & Leisure* — have been willing to pass royalties on to their writers. But the Bostonians are not alone. The *Globe's* parent, The New York Times Company; Scholastic Inc.; some Hearst magazines; and other media organizations have sent out similar contracts to their free-lancers.

The Village Voice's new contract, first given to free-lancers in February, asks for exclusive rights, but only for thirty days. It also asks the writer to grant the paper the right to include the article in a database, or any kind of anthology of *Voice* writings. "We have to retain the ability to archive," says Barbara Cohen, the *Voice's* in-house counsel. Another argument from publishers: at some point there has to be closure. It's impractical to chase a writer many years after she has produced her work.

"In this new age of electronic publishing you need to clarify who owns what," says *Globe* spokesman Richard Gulla. But the Boston free-lancers think the clarification process has been taken a bit too far.

Writer Wendy Kaminer views contracts like the *Globe's* as a nationwide civil-liberties issue, in that ownership and control of ideas are being concen-

Victor Garo, a gruff-talking lawyer who had represented Salvati pro bono for seventeen years. In 1989, Garo had obtained — he won't say how — a long-suppressed 1965 police report written right after the Deegan murder. It revealed that an informant had named Barboza and others, including a mobster named Vincent Flemmi, as the probable conspirators.

Before the murder a Chelsea policeman had noticed Barboza and others — including a bald man in the back seat — in a car parked near the alley. Barboza, Rea reported, had apparently lied to investigators, telling them that Salvati, his loan shark customer, had been the "bald" man. But Rea showed viewers a picture of thick-haired Salvati and a photograph of the now-deceased Flemmi, Barboza's friend, who, as Rea put it, "was as bald as a cue ball."

Rea's broadcasts brought new witnesses forward. One of them, a Yale Law School professor named Stephen Duke, produced an affidavit by a former client who had shared a prison cell with Barboza. The client said he had heard Barboza "claim with pride that he had given Salvati the 'long dry death.'"

Governor Weld decided to recommend — based on a review of the case — that his statutory advisory council vote to commute Salvati's sentence. Weld, a patrician intellectual who neither watches a television nor owns one, saw none of Rea's broadcasts, says Virginia Buckingham, his chief of staff. But Rea "obviously kept the issue on

trated in the hands of a few. Jonathan Tasini, plaintiff in a lawsuit against The New York Times Company and others and president of the National Writers Union, sees it as a constitutional issue. He points out that the Constitution gives Congress the power "to promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries." Assuming journalism is, more or less, a "useful art," the Founding Fathers' intentions seem straightforward.

Tom Duffy, a founder of the Boston protest group, emphasizes that the *Globe* has been "a wonderful, progressive employer." He is therefore quite willing to rethink the rules as the Web transforms the journalistic game, he says, "but why do they need to grab the entire copyright?"

The *Globe* apparently wanted to leave no room for confusion. Or lawsuits.

Tasini v. The New York Times is a still-unresolved suit filed in December 1993, by eleven writers attempting to recoup damages from the *Times* (and *Newsday Inc.*, *Time Inc.*, *Nexis-Lexis*, and others) for using their articles electronically without permission. The suit seems to have sent some publishers running to their lawyers — who've drawn up some seriously unambiguous contracts that require writers to grant that permission. In September, *Editor & Publisher* advised publishers, in light of the Tasini case, "to obtain the broadest rights possible, often described as a grant of 'all rights.'"

Meanwhile, writers like to eat. Despite their reservations, some freelancers do end up signing the contracts because the pluses (a check, a nice clip) can outweigh the minuses — a loss of leverage. "I signed a particularly bad and odious contract with *Playboy* last year," says Rogier van Bakel, a free-lancer in Sharon, Connecticut. "You spend an enormous amount of time establishing contact with an editor. Then he sends you the contract and all that he can say is, 'This is what my boss or my lawyer is telling me to do.'"

Christina Ianzito

Ianzito is an assistant editor at CJR.

POLITICS

THE SOLUTION: FREE AIRTIME

At one time, Paul Taylor, forty-seven, was best known as the reporter who asked a bimbo-burdened Gary Hart the big-A question in the early days of the 1988 presidential campaign. As the 1996 campaign got under way, Taylor decided he'd rather help reform the money-swollen American system of electing a president than cover another campaign. He left *The Washington Post* to found the Free TV for Straight Talk Coalition, where he's still raising questions that are being taken seriously.

The questions now are about whether the powerful broadcast industry or the people own the airwaves, and whether the federal government can mandate how those airwaves are used. Like others, Taylor insists that free airtime is the most efficient and practical way to reform how this nation finances its political campaigns, since paying for airtime is what so inflates campaign costs. His Free TV coalition, run out of his home with foundation support, was modestly successful at persuading the networks to donate airtime in 1996, what Taylor calls "a useful first step." But the 1996 presidential campaign was by far the most expensive in history, and the massive amounts of money that the Democrats raised have come back, like tainted meat at a campaign banquet, to bedevil the administration's second term. Taylor sees opportunity.

A beleaguered President Clinton, scouting for high ground in the campaign-finance skirmish, appeared at a March conference Taylor organized, and endorsed Free TV's proposal. "It was the president saying the FCC has the power to mandate" free airtime, Taylor says. And Reed Hundt, chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, told *The New York Times* on the day of the Free TV conference, "I believe that we have the power and the precedent and the procedure for giving free access to media for all candidates."

Not everyone agrees. Broadcasters

have long opposed mandatory free airtime for politicians," says Edward O. Fritts, president and c.e.o. of the National Association of Broadcasters, "because it won't prevent illegal campaign contributions, won't reduce the cost of campaigns, won't stop negative campaign ads and is blatantly unconstitutional." It's unconstitutional, broadcasters argue, because it violates their Fifth Amendment rights that protect private property from being taken for public use without just compensation. They also argue that under the First Amendment, it would be unconstitutional for lawmakers to tell them what to put on the air.

"The important thing," Taylor says, "is that we have established the principle that the public deserves some free airtime for campaigns. It's going to be a very tough fight, because it's going to cost broadcasters some things they don't want to give up. But if we wind up with free airtime some other way, it's still an enormous win."

Taylor concedes that in many countries that provide free airtime, "it's very dull TV." But he adds, "The idea here is to try to adapt to our more market-driven television. You've got to give the candidates what they find most useful."

Taylor's proposal to pay for all this creativity is based on an approach that seems to have several fathers, although Hundt of the FCC usually gets credit. The plan, whether mandated by the commission or legislated by Congress, would require the broadcast industry to create a political time bank. All qualifying candidates for federal office would receive vouchers from the time bank, either directly or through the political parties. Candidates would use the vouchers to "purchase" broadcast time at the prevailing rates in their media markets.

The total market value of the time would be about \$500 million for each two-year election cycle. One financing plan would assess each broadcaster and cable station a surcharge of fifty percent on all political advertising they sell at prevailing commercial rates.

Taylor believes it's unlikely that Hundt's FCC could act unilaterally to impose a free-time requirement. One

The New York Times Company is proud to announce that 1997 Pulitzer Prizes have been awarded to:



John F. Burns, New Delhi bureau chief of The New York Times, for his reporting on Afghanistan's Taliban fighters and the harsh version of Islam they imposed in the capital city of Kabul and surrounding villages. Mr. Burns drew on his long journalistic experience, and his finely honed instincts for survival in a war zone, to witness, report and analyze the severity and power of the Taliban fighters. He previously won a Pulitzer Prize, in 1993, for his New York Times coverage of the strife in Bosnia.



Eileen McNamara, columnist for The Boston Globe, for her twice-weekly Metro section columns on a variety of subjects. Among those for which Ms. McNamara was honored were one on the long hours spent in a hospital waiting room as her mother lay gravely ill, and another on the questionable off-field behavior of a college football player slated to play for the New England Patriots. Ms. McNamara became a columnist only last year, after more than 20 years as a reporter.



Annie Wells, photographer for The Press Democrat of Santa Rosa, California, for her photograph of a Santa Rosa firefighter's dramatic rescue of a 15-year-old girl from a rain-swollen creek. Ms. Wells's photograph caught the moment the girl was on the verge of being swept under the waters, and the image ran in newspapers worldwide. Ms. Wells has been a Press Democrat photographer for eight years, and covered the 1996 World Cup and the 1989 Bay Area earthquake.

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The president endorses "free-air" reform.

possibility is that the industry will come up with a free-airtime proposal of its own for presidential races.

"A very important new lever has been introduced into the equation," Taylor says. "The issue of mandated free time has been thrown into play."

Joe Holley

Holley is a *CJR* contributing editor.

POINT OF VIEW

THE DARK SIDE OF ONLINE SCOOPS

Some webheads are touting February 28, 1997 — when *The Dallas Morning News* broke a big story on the Internet seven hours before the paper hit print — as a kind of journalistic Bastille Day. Newspapers were liberated from the time constraints of printing-press production, empowered to break news instantly. As reader representative Jean Otto put it, with a hint of glee, in the *Rocky Mountain News*: "The playing field on which print and electronic journalism have been slugging it out for many decades was suddenly leveled."

But what this supposed liberation may actually do is shackle papers to an exhausting, shallow deadline-every-second treadmill.

Here's the background. The *Morning News* had dug up the incendiary story that Oklahoma City bombing defendant Timothy McVeigh confessed to his lawyers that he indeed triggered

the bomb. But once its staff began seeking reaction just before publication, there was a danger McVeigh's lawyer might try to spin the story in advance, destroying the paper's exclusive in a live press conference. So, with the stroke of a mouse, the editors preempted the risk by launching the story onto the Net. Other news organizations had broken stories online (among them, *Time* magazine); but this was apparently the first time a major mainstream newspaper had used the web page to uncork such a huge, explosive story.

The trend has continued. Shortly after the *Morning News* scoop, *Time* went online with an exclusive on suspected linkages between recent bombings in Atlanta — a couple of days before the magazine was on the stands. On March 11, *Playboy* hit the Net with a detailed narrative of McVeigh's movements just before and just after the Oklahoma blast. This story appeared on the *Playboy* website before the glossy version reached magazine racks.

Until recently, newspapers had avoided breaking stories online to avoid scooping themselves. But now media reporter Howard Kurtz of *The Washington Post* predicts that breaking stories online will be routine within a couple of years. Today, given the relatively small number of Net users, the main advantages are to ensure getting credit for a perishable exclusive and to have global impact even if one's publication is regional. If Internet readership multiplies and electronic newspapers become profitable, the advantages will proliferate.

Unfortunately, the trend has a dark side. Instant filing may make newspapers more like wire services, and anyone who has worked under deadline-every-minute pressure knows what that means: an emphasis on getting facts to the screens immediately, with little patience for enterprise and investigation. Feed the beast. File. Now. Now. Now! If newspapers switch to a twenty-four-hour cyber-cycle, they may well take on some of the less desirable traits of today's on-screen news services and Net sites, such as:

- *Stenography for the status quo.* News outlets that are constantly on the clock are inevitably more reactive than those

with time to deliberate before publication. The former devote far more energy to reporting what officials say than to assessing the validity of the statements. The officials routinely set the agenda.

- *Looser standards.* The risk exists that the wild culture of the Web will erode standards of accuracy when papers go online, as media critic Tom Rosenstiel argues in the March 21 edition of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. He writes that, when the *San Jose Mercury News* put up a website version of its questionable series on what it alleged were possible links between the CIA and cocaine smuggling, the paper went even further than it had in print. The Web version had an incendiary logo overlaying the CIA emblem with pictures of cocaine. And the story's reporter, Gary Webb, participated in Internet "chat room" dialogue in which he made more sweeping claims than he ever had in the paper.

- *A focus on the flavor of the minute.* Writing in the early 1960s, historian Daniel Boorstin observed that, due to the pace and schedule of news reporting, Americans had come to demand an unrealistic level of novelty: "We expect new heroes every season, a literary masterpiece every month, a dramatic spectacular every week, a rare sensation every night." That was in the era of morning and evening papers and fifteen-minute nightly news broadcasts. On a twenty-four-hour-a-day news cycle, the public expects a new hero every hour, a dramatic spectacular every ten minutes, a rare sensation every thirty seconds. News organizations on such a cycle — like CNN — must devote vast amounts of effort to satisfying the public's appetite for novelty for just the next half hour.

A newspaper that commits itself to the online world is likely to find its resources dissipated in just such a shallow pond, with little energy left over for the good writing, clear explanation, in-depth investigation, and offbeat approaches that have come to mark the best newspaper journalism.

Christopher Hanson

Hanson is Washington correspondent for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* and a contributing editor of *CJR*.

DOUG MARRILL

CJR Grapevine

A Paper Prince Is Dethroned

First they agreed to sell the company he had expected to lead one day. Then they fired him. Then he sued them. "It's hardly a scandal," says Shannon Donnelly, society writer for the *Palm Beach Daily News* in Florida, who has been watching the hometown drama unfold. "This is a town where

everyone is a millionaire and everyone has had trouble with their kids, especially in family businesses."

But this particular family business is a journalistic institution. The Scripps League newspaper chain is an independent splinter off what became the Scripps-Howard empire, all of which has been closely held by the descendants of founder E.W. Scripps. And the plaintiff is suing his parents in part because he fears he'll never get a comparable newspaper job.

Barry Scripps, 52, who had worked for Scripps League since college — most recently to "turn around" the *Haverhill Gazette* in Massachusetts — claims in the multimillion-dollar lawsuit that his parents' sale of the family chain to Pulitzer Publishing last year left him "in the stressful and humiliating position of being unemployed, without a source of income, having received no severance pay, and with few opportunities and insufficient resources for starting anew in a highly competitive industry." Left unmentioned was Barry's refusal of an offer of \$11 million for his stock in the company, which was sold for about \$215 million. He stands to collect a tidy sum for it — someday.

The suit is nonsense, respond Barry's parents, Edward and Betty Knight Scripps, 87 and 70 (that's Mom's photo above). In court documents they say they had never promised Barry he'd have perpetual employment with the company — and even if they had promised, they'd still have expected Barry to prove he was up to the job. Which, they say, he wasn't. "This case," their court filing begins, "is about the ingratitude of a privileged son."

Barry's lost legacy would have consisted of some two dozen shoppers and sixteen papers, most of them published in smaller western towns. Barry's great-

grandfather E.W. had built his empire of mass-circulation papers out of a single Cleveland daily he started in 1878, riding to fortune on the massed pennies of "plain and poor people" who appreciated his cheap prices, his thrilling fare, and his straightforward philosophy: "God damn the rich."

For Brill the Thrill Is Print

Steven Brill has been called everything from scum to a Medici in his two-decade career covering — and skewering, spattering, and shaking up — the legal profession. On the premise that lawyers are "too important to remain anonymous," Brill, 46, built a multimedia empire, high in visibility but modest in profits, that was dedicated to minding their business. The empire eventually encompassed print (*The American Lawyer* and a collection of regional law publications), cable television (Court TV), and online, with the subscription service Counsel Connect. In February Brill sold his stake in the whole enterprise to Time Warner — which already owned a majority interest — for a rumored \$20 million to \$40 million. His plans for the future are unclear.

But odds are they won't stray far from the printed word. As the most vociferous champion ever of opening the courtroom to cameras, Brill helped change the face of American justice (into, among many others, Judge Ito's). Yet he still reveres print as the "stuff that has the most impact," as he said in March in a speech at American Business Press's annual Jesse H. Neal Awards presentation for excellence in business trade publications.

"In 1969, many of us woke one morning to find a front-page story from a reporter named Seymour Hersh about American soldiers massacring women and children in Vietnam. Had we been hooked on the wonders of the Internet in those days, none of us readers would have woken up that morning and said, 'Gee, I wonder

whether Seymour Hersh has any information about Americans massacring women and children in Vietnam. Why don't I do a search?' This was information I didn't know I needed to know or wanted to know on that morning in 1969. Rather I paid the editor and the reporter, with my twenty-five cents for a newspaper, to tell me what they thought I should know. And I got my money's worth."

A Cybersage for IRE

When Brant Houston was named the new executive director of Investigative Reporters and Editors in March, the national organization to train working journalists got a chief with seventeen years' worth of experience in daily journalism and a place firmly on the cutting edge. As the managing director for the past three years of IRE's National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting, Houston, 43, led the drive to teach reporters how to stop worrying and love the database. It's a romance that has left some IRE members cold.

"Brant is a very focused, driven guy," says Mike McGraw, an IRE board member and a special-projects reporter for *The Kansas City Star*. "When he took over NICAR he took it from zero to sixty in half a second, and there was some concern on the board that NICAR was beginning to eclipse IRE."

Choosing the cyber-literate Houston was "a sign of the times," says Deborah Nelson of *The Seattle Times*, chair of IRE's board.

"But he's also well-grounded in the other essentials — interviewing, analyzing, developing sources, working with paper files. Computer-assisted reporting has celebrity status because it's new, and it's understood by only a few. We're hoping Brant will lead the way in making it another tool the average journalist can use to dig out facts."

That's something Houston appreciates. "I started out in journalism on a typewriter," he says, "and I was reluctant to use my first laptop. I probably



who's where and what's what

have a deep-seated hatred of computers." But, he adds, "I also started in journalism using index cards to track campaign finance stories, and then one day I found out there was a way I could do in twenty minutes what used to take five hours spread out all over the floor."

"There's been a revolution in information, and we're working to figure out our spot in it as journalists," says Houston. "But we're still looking for good stories, not good spread sheets."

Cisneros Goes to Broadcast

He's like a puppy right now, he's so enthusiastic," says an old San Antonio friend of Henry Cisneros. "I tell him to watch out. You don't know these media-entertainment types. They're just waiting for you to fall on your ass."

Cisneros, formerly President Clinton's secretary of Housing and Urban Development and before that the mayor of San Antonio, is the U.S.'s best-known Hispanic public official. In February he took over as president and c.o.o. of Univision Communications Inc., parent of the booming Miami-based Spanish-language Univision network. It's a job loaded with potential to influence the twenty-eight million members of the fastest-growing minority group in America.

Though he has little broadcast experience, Cisneros at 49 runs the nation's fifth-largest broadcast network. With thirty-nine broadcast affiliates and 740 cable outlets, Univision claims a 77-percent share of the country's Hispanic viewing audience. Its only rival, Miami-based Telemundo Group, comes in far behind with an estimated audience of 6.1 million households.

Much of the network's popularity rests on its *telenovelas* — spicy soap operas produced primarily in Mexico — but Univision also draws large audiences with its news programming. Its Miami affiliate WLTW has had a higher-rated newscast than either CBS, NBC, or Fox, and in Los Angeles, the nation's number two market, Univision's flagship station KMEX-TV regularly beats its Big Three competitors among young adult viewers. KMEX also organized a massive two-year citizenship and voter-registration drive and spoke out last fall against California ballot initiatives targeting illegal immigration and state affir-



him to stay out there for six years and then come home and run for the Senate," Cisneros's San Antonio friend says. "He tells me, 'Don't even think such a thing.'"

CNN's Woman in Havana

Lucia Newman knows she's being watched. As chief of the new Cuba bureau for CNN — the first U.S. news organization to win Castro's approval to set up shop since 1969 — she has seen her work held under the microscope by Cuban officials, Washington, and, perhaps especially, the Cuban exile community. "They were watching us closely," says Newman, 45. "Now they're insulting us closely."

Since she left her post in Mexico City as CNN's senior Latin American correspondent to begin reporting from Havana on March 17, opponents of the Castro regime in Miami have sent angry letters complaining about any report that's not "throwing buckets of criticism at Castro," she says. The Cuban government, meanwhile, seems to be reserving judgment; it issued no official complaint when — to Miami's delight — she reported on how difficult it is for Cubans to be independent journalists, not affiliated with the official media. "They're going to judge us on a long-term basis, not on the basis of a few reports," she says.

Newman, her husband, and their two small children are now trying to make the island home. She's uprooted her own life many times before: half Chilean and half American, she lived in Australia for ten years, first working in print and radio, and eventually as a deputy producer at an Australian

mative-action programs.

That kind of political involvement is likely to continue with Cisneros in charge — and to prompt speculation about his future political ambitions. "I tell

TV station. She had moved to Nicaragua to start her career as a foreign correspondent when CNN hired her.

Now Newman herself seems thrilled to be sent to territory relatively uncharted by U.S. journalists. The island is — more or less — hers for the reporting. In her first few weeks she covered Cuba's handling of the U.S. economic embargo, but she also covered the world's longest (five days and four nights) salsa contest, and has "loads of ideas" for the future. "Did you know that you can get an eight-year jail sentence in Cuba for killing a cow? I said I was going to do every aspect of Cuban culture," she says, "and I'm doing it."

For NPR, Freedom in Variety

When Bill Buzenberg first went to work as a foreign affairs correspondent for National Public Radio eighteen years ago, he would call people for interviews and get the response "What? What's NPR?" Now as Buzenberg, 50, steps down after seven years as NPR's vice president for news and information, the network's news programs reach nearly 13 million listeners weekly. During his tenure alone, NPR earned nine duPont-Columbia awards and ten Peabody awards; it added 175 new stations for a total of 570, and its news budget nearly doubled, to \$23.3 million.

While NPR relies heavily on financial support from its listeners, it's often criticized for accepting money from other sources — government, corporations, special-interest foundations — that might compromise its independence. But Buzenberg argues that in the variety of its funders there is safety. NPR will continue to maintain its editorial independence, he says, "as long as no single funder (including Congress) can determine what will or will not be aired."

A successor to Buzenberg has not yet been named. With his wife, Susan, he is editing the memoirs of Richard Salant, the legendary president of CBS News in the '60s and '70s.

By Ron LaBrecque, Joe Holley, and CJR staff.



SCORPS: WASHINGTON POST/GERARD MARTINEAU; BILL BUZENBERG: NITV; TURES; CISNEROS: AP PHOTO/MARY ELLEN HANCOCK; LUCIA NEWMAN: CNN; BUZENBERG: PULLA DAVIS

CJR World



THAILAND

MEDIA RISING

How the press is bolstering democracy

Just after midnight, May 17, 1992, the order came from military authorities who had already opened fire on pro-democracy demonstrators in Bangkok: no stories or photos of the protest. The editors of *The Nation*, an English-language newspaper, huddled. "We didn't know whether they would close all the papers," recalls Thepchai Yong, then the news editor.

That morning, *The Nation's* detailed coverage led with a front-page photo of policemen clubbing a cowering protester. Copies of the newspaper picture were circulated around the city, drawing more outraged people to the huge street rallies. The protests forced the chiefs of the armed forces, who had seized power in a 1991 coup, to step down. Free elections followed, and a critical element was the support for democracy of the country's privately owned newspapers.

Since the uprising, a more liberal atmosphere has made the media even more powerful in fostering Thai democracy. They are bringing public opinion to bear on politicians who once wheeled and dealt with impunity.

Thailand's surging middle class, which led the 1992 uprising, is leading this media revolution. The top papers — including the *The Nation* (owned by a prominent journalist and local businessmen, with a circulation of 50,000) and the *Bangkok Post* (owned by local businessmen, with a circulation of 60,000) and the Thai-language *Matichon* (owned by journalists, with a circulation of 425,000) — champion the rule of law and more accountable government.

Some self-censorship continues, and last year the authorities canceled a few



By printing this photo, *The Nation* helped topple a dictatorship and bring in free elections.

critical programs on state TV and radio. But among Southeast Asia's ten countries, the freedom of Thailand's media is matched only in the Philippines.

The most important media reform was breaking the state monopoly over TV. The first non-government station, Independent TV, began broadcasting in July 1996, stressing news and documentaries. Later this year, the government will open bidding for a second station.

The Nation is part of a consortium operating ITV, and Thepchai is now the station's news editor. ITV is shaking up a Thai TV news culture characterized by drawn-out footage of ceremonies and of officials expounding their views. When six drug suspects were shot dead last November, state TV had the police saying they opened fire in self-defense. ITV interviewed witnesses and, as did some newspapers, suggested that the men were summarily executed. A parliamentary inquiry resulted.

Even the state media are changing with the times. Radio is bolder and the TV stations are airing a wider range of views, sometimes including not-so-subtle criticism of the government. But what's literally got the whole town talking are the many public-affairs talk shows with audience participation that have appeared on TV and radio for the first time. While stuck in Bangkok's notorious traffic, housewives and businessmen using mobile phones call in to vent their frustrations at the congested roads, the sluggish economy, the government. "At one time we couldn't say anything about politics," says Surapone Virulrak, a vice president of Chulalongkorn University. "Now we can even go too far."

Peter Eng

Eng, a free-lance writer, was news editor of the AP bureau in Bangkok until last year.

OFF SICILY

SUNKEN STORY

Why are you just now hearing this?

Last Christmas Day a ship carrying hundreds of would-be illegal immigrants, attempting to smuggle themselves into southern Europe from India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, dropped anchor somewhere off Sicily. The captain, a known smuggler of human cargo, herded some 300 of his passengers — whom he had charged up to \$8,000 each to slip into the First World — onto a small wooden vessel that was supposed to take them ashore. He was drunk and violent. Either by acci-

THE NATION

dent or by design, the master ship, flying under a Honduran flag, suddenly turned into the side of the overcrowded landing boat. It sank and 283 people are believed to have died.

Chances are, you are reading about this for the first time. How come?

The New York Times and *The Washington Post* ran short wire reports, and most U.S. papers failed to do even that. In Europe, too, the coverage was minimal. Only *The Observer*, Britain's oldest Sunday paper, assigned correspondents to the case in the weeks after the event. The paper ran prominent articles over two weeks in mid-January.

The grim calculus of death-and-disaster coverage is familiar. Some stories — because of whom they involve, where they happen, or their likely impact — tend to excite editors; others don't. But mass death in European territory, especially when it may have been an intentional massacre, usually merits attention in the West. What, then, was the calculus in the case of the ship *Yioham*?

On the simplest level, the Greek islands, where survivors eventually landed, are remote and the disaster occurred during the holiday season, when many senior editors and correspondents were on vacation. And it developed slowly and confusingly. Some survivors phoned their homes in Asia and told their families about the disaster. Over the next few days, most were rounded up by the Greek police and put in detention centers. Their story began leaking out. On January 4, Reuters ran a short report about a possible disaster at sea. Five days later, the news agency reported that the Greek police had issued arrest warrants for mass murder against three fugitive Greek sailors, and were seeking the captain of the *Yioham*, a Lebanese resident of Athens.

But on another level, troubling political and editorial issues arise. As David Rose, one of *The Observer* correspondents on the story, put it: "There's a sense in which people who try to come in illegally are non-people. They're completely dehumanized."

In any event, the media missed a big, many-layered story. "The fact that the victims were undocumented made the story more interesting for me, because the exploitation of immigrants and the handling of immigrants is one of the great scandals of our time," says Bill Keller, foreign editor of *The New York Times*. "It's the modern-day equivalent

of a slave ship sinking a couple hundred years ago. There was a profit motive here; you could affix some kind of accountability. That's why I wish we'd done more with it."

Sasha Abramsky

Abramsky lives in New York and often writes about European and U.S. politics.

MEXICO

TIJUANA BRASS

Cloud Over a Crusader

In his 36-year career as a leading editor and journalist in Mexico's most rough-and-tumble news town, J. Jesús Blancornelas has seen his partner murdered, his newspaper shut down by union goons, and all copies of an offending issue confiscated by the government.

But nothing prepared him for the events of April 9, when his former attorney and his former accountant were murdered as they were leaving a popular Tijuana restaurant. Blancornelas had recently sued the accountant, Héctor Navarro, accusing him of embezzling hundreds of thousands of dollars. After the crime Navarro's widow publicly accused Blancornelas of ordering the hit.

"In all my years as a journalist, this is the most difficult moment," says Blancornelas, editor and publisher of the prize-winning weekly tabloid *Zeta*. "There's an enormous press campaign against me." Indeed, the accusation was splashed all over the front pages of Tijuana dailies.

As the hard-nosed editor of one of Mexico's most aggressive newspapers, Blancornelas has made plenty of enemies. Over the years, while other local papers were reprinting press releases and flattering officialdom, *Zeta* was investigating drug trafficking, migrant smuggling, and official corruption — and naming names. That style of journalism has won Blancornelas awards from press organizations in the United States, including the Committee to Protect Journalists. William A. Orme, Jr., CPJ's executive director, describes him as "the spiritual godfather of modern Mexican journalism."

While Blancornelas had accused Navarro of embezzlement and had had a public falling-out with the murdered attorney, no evidence has been presented linking the editor to the killings. The authorities

say they plan to question Blancornelas but do not consider him a suspect. Two of the newspapers accusing Blancornelas of the crime are owned by his political enemies: *El Heraldo* by a Tijuana impresario whom Blancornelas charges with ordering the murder of his partner and *Zeta* columnist, Héctor Félix, in 1988; and *El Mexicano* by the leader of the government-controlled labor union that shut down Blancornelas's first newspaper in 1979.

In the edition of *Zeta* after the murders, Blancornelas wrote that the crime may have been ordered "by the enemies of Jesús Blancornelas . . . in order to personally blame him or damage the newspaper."

The professional nature of the hit — two men driving a stolen car with California plates coolly shot both victims in the face with a shotgun — also raises the possibility that one or both of the men had run afoul of Tijuana's drug bosses.

The murders have already had a profound effect on the Mexican press. Despite a dramatic improvement in the Mexican media, for which Blancornelas and *Zeta* can claim much credit — bribes have become less common and coverage more aggressive and competitive — the allegations and recriminations played out in Tijuana's newspapers show that for some publishers the press remains a vehicle for attacking political enemies. And the mur-



Zeta's J. Jesús Blancornelas

ders themselves reflect a climate of growing violence in Tijuana that has many people, including journalists, frightened.

"In Tijuana, I'm a hated man because I've written about all the corruption," Blancornelas laments. "Something could happen to me and they'd never find out who did it."

Joel Simon

Simon is the author of Endangered Mexico: An Environment on the Edge.

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Darts & Laurels

◆ **DART** to the Lawrence, Massachusetts, *Eagle-Tribune*, for playing journalistic hooky. As detailed in a page-one story (February 13) in *The Boston Globe*, reports on John F. Scully, the city's high-profile, low-credentialed, lifetime-tenured superintendent of schools and his uncommendable deportment have been repeatedly absent from the *Eagle-Tribune*. Some \$80 million provided by the Education Reform Act of 1993 has been squandered on fancy cars, mahogany-and-leather offices, and a wildly expanded personal staff of relatives and friends (not to mention the bagpipe teacher hired at \$40,000 a year) while teachers and students make do in crowded classrooms with out-of-date books and inadequate supplies. As the *Globe* pointed out, when school officials learned in January that the city's only high school would lose its state accreditation, an *Eagle-Tribune* editorial advised local politicians to "back off" and stop "raising a ruckus" about the city's schools. One possible explanation for the paper's failing record: Scully is the former son-in-law, and the father of the two young grandchildren, of Irving Rogers, publisher of the *Eagle-Tribune*. Another intramural item: the Eagle Tribune Publishing Company prints report cards and other such materials for the school system that Scully heads.

◆ **LAUREL** to the *Cape Cod Times*, of Hyannis, Massachusetts, for turning the tide. In a sweeping six-part series (beginning January 5), the paper documented the abysmal failure of a fifteen-year, \$165-million plan to stem the daily flow of toxic waste from the Massachusetts Military Reservation into the water supply of the Upper Cape. Based on a five-month investigation, and enhanced with glossaries, maps, photos, and graphs, the series explained how poisonous chemicals commonly present on the 22,000-acre base — for example, lead from bullets left lying about on the firing range — leak into the ground and end up in the bathroom shower and the kitchen sink. It showed how indifferent legislators, bungling regulators, and lazy administrators consistently botched the cleanup of the Superfund site. It analyzed the disturbing rates of cancer — more than 24 percent higher than the state average — in the area's population. It explored practical strategies to reverse the rapidly growing environmental crisis. And in its wake, it left a wave of state and federal audits, studies, and investigations, as well as official vows of reform.

◆ **DART** to *The Tampa Tribune*, for being overly hospitable. Notwithstanding the post-election announcement that political reporter Brian Edwards would be moving on to

Washington as press secretary to Representative-elect Jim Davis, the Democratic winner of a nasty congressional race that Edwards had covered from the earliest primaries on, the paper saw no reason to hurry him out before his new boss's swearing-in. Until he actually went through the revolving door the ex-journalist continued on the job, filing, among other stories, one that revealed an extramarital affair between a telecommunications lobbyist and a Republican state senator.

◆ **LAUREL** to The Associated Press and writer Martha Mendoza, for looking a gift horse in the mouth. In a January 5 report, Mendoza revealed how a multimillion-dollar federal program created to protect thousands of wild horses on public lands is instead racing them by the thousands into slaughterhouses. Administered by the Bureau of Land Management, the program encourages individual citizens to adopt up to four healthy, government-vaccinated horses each and care for them for a year, after which they get legal title to the animals in the form of BLM's suitable-for-framing certificates. But with that legal title comes the right to dispose of the horses as the adoptive owners see fit. And as Mendoza's computer-assisted tracking showed, many of the owners — among them, BLM employees — see fit to sell the animals under their protection for processing into horse meat, at a profit of some seven hundred bucks a horse. After conceding that about 90 percent of the horses rounded up each year end up being butchered, Tom Pogacnik, director of the BLM's \$16 million-a-year Wild Horse and Burro program, told the AP reporter, "We're here because we care about the critters. They're a wonderful part of America, and we're here to protect them. Of course, we've got a ways to go."

◆ **DART** to *Spy* magazine; *Adweek*; the *Los Angeles Times*; the *Asbury Park* (New Jersey) *Press*; and Iowa TV stations KCRG and KWWL, for their active participation in the Product Protection Program. Late last year *Spy* refused to carry an ad designed by the Amalgamated Lithographers Union to call attention to the fact that a number of K-III magazines — including *Spy* — were using a union-busting shop, one that had been cited by the National Labor Relations Board for unfair labor practices, for much of their pre-press work. *Adweek* also refused the ad, telling the agency that the revenue from "one union ad" was not worth the risk of losing the revenue from K-III's advertising. The *Los Angeles Times* refused to carry a series of ads for Pacific Bell's At Hand, a website that features news and information similar to that offered on the *Times*'s own website. The

Asbury Park Press refused to run an ad placed by a community alliance to stop the use of Halloween images in "marketing beer to children" — until the alliance agreed to remove the names and logos of the offending big-time brewers. KCRG, the CBS affiliate in Cedar Rapids, and KWWL, the NBC affiliate in Waterloo, refused to sell airtime to the Center for Science in the Public Interest for a commercial describing health problems associated with a product then being test-marketed in the Cedar Rapids area — Frito-Lay potato and tortilla chips made with olestra, the controversial fat substitute produced by Procter & Gamble. Twelve other stations that were also approached by CSPI in various test-market cities — Eau Claire, Wisconsin; Grand Junction, Colorado; Columbus, Ohio; and Indianapolis, Indiana, as well as Cedar Rapids — accepted the commercial. Refusing to watch their advertisers' weight, those stations have managed to stay fit.

◆ **LAUREL** to *West Wing*, the student newspaper of Mission High, San Francisco's most disadvantaged inner-city public school, for taking to heart that grand old adage about the mightiness of the pen. When the district superintendent inexplicably replaced Mission's highly popular principal with a highly contentious one who didn't speak the students' language in any sense, *West Wing* became their voice of reasoned protest. In straightforward, balanced reports the paper kept the school, the community, and the city informed about Mission's dramatic improvement in state test scores and dropout rates under the ousted principal; about the peaceful demonstration in which students, linking arms, encircled the building; about board of education meetings on teacher-contract issues; and about the controversial acts of the communicationally challenged principal — from his attempted suspension of an annoying columnist to the handing out of expensive basketball shoes to the boys while requiring the girls to pay half the price of theirs. In March, *West Wing* became the first winner of the Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association's Sullivan award for "idealism, resilience, and pragmatism."

◆ **DART** to *The Kansas City Star*, for not putting its mouth where its money is. A December 30 editorial took to task three gambling casinos in the area that had filed protests against the assessed values of their properties with the Missouri State Tax Commission. The paper argued that the casinos were not being "good neighbors" because such challenges could hurt the children in the local schools. But as was swiftly pointed out by the alternative weekly *New Times*, the editorial, headed TAX PROTESTS HURT EDUCATION, neglected to mention that *The Kansas City Star* is appealing its tax assessments for 1995 and 1996 — and that, if the paper were to get the refund it is seeking, more than \$300,000 of it would come out of the school district's dwindling stack of chips.

◆ **DART** to *Country Inns*, "The Lifestyle Magazine for the Sophisticated Traveler" based in South Orange, New Jersey, and editor Gail Rudder Kent; and to *Tikkun*, "a bimonthly Jewish critique of politics, culture, and society" based in San Francisco, and editor Michael Lerner, for inventive editing. Of the twenty-one people listed on the *Country Inns* masthead as members of the editorial staff, five are creations of the editor's imagination and one is an outside friend. (Kent, impersonating her assistant, has denied this.) Similarly, of the many provocative letters to the editor published in *Tikkun*, an unestimated number have been written — and will continue to be written, an unrepentant Lerner told *The Washington Post* — pseudonymously by him.

◆ **LAUREL** to *The Wall Street Journal* and reporters Michael K. Frisby and David Rogers, for bringing the public into the pipeline. With their page-one story on March 17, Frisby and Rogers unearthed yet another, deeper layer of campaign-finance dirt. This time, the story involved more than the familiar greasing of the palm of the Democratic National Committee by a motivated businessman — namely, one Roger Tamraz, a Lebanese-born U.S. citizen who was seeking U.S. support for his plan to build a multibillion-dollar oil pipeline from the Caspian Sea to Turkey. This time, it involved an attempt by Donald Fowler, then chairman of the DNC, to pressure the National Security Council to clear Tamraz, a generous donor (some \$177,000 in 1995 and '96) for access to President Clinton. And this time, after the NSC's denial of that clearance to the controversial Tamraz — who has had dealings with Libya and Iraq and is alleged to have embezzled bank funds in Lebanon — it involved the mysterious reach of the DNC into the Central Intelligence Agency. Prodded by the DNC, the CIA provided the NSC with a (presumably) reassuring report on Tamraz (who did, in fact, meet with Clinton five times after that). The *Journal's* reporting has fueled investigations by Congress, the White House, and the CIA into the possibly illegal breach of national security safeguards.

◆ **DART** to *The Wall Street Journal*, for regressive journalism. Headline over Joel Millman's December 26 page-one account of how a labor dispute between Basic Petroleum International Ltd. and its workers in Latin America was resolved by Gilberte Beaux, the company's c.e.o.: FRENCH GRANDMOTHER BRINGS LABOR PEACE TO GUATEMALA JUNGLE. (Interestingly, two columns away, Joseph B. White's story on how a Pratt & Whitney factory in northern Maine was brought back from the brink of death by Robert Ponchak, the company's risk-taking plant manager, left readers completely in the dark as to Ponchak's progenitorial status.)

This column is compiled and written by Gloria Cooper, CJR's managing editor, to whom nominations should be addressed.

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THE CELLULOID CLOSET

HOW DO YOU SPELL GOD?

THE JOURNEY OF THE
AFRICAN-AMERICAN ATHLETE

PARADISE LOST:
THE CHILD MURDERS AT ROBIN HOOD HILLS

HBO



by *Andie Tucher*

Tom Brokaw comes to our telephone interview loaded for bear. To my boilerplate question — “How do you respond to the critics who say your newscast has become softer?” — he snaps back that many of the critics are also competitors with agendas of their own.

“There is an elitist, myopic point of view about what these broadcasts have been and what they should be,” he says, “and I’m getting a little weary of it. There are no important stories we have missed.” After we hang up, he calls me back to say I had overstated the length of a piece I had mentioned as an example of a softer story — two minutes on the Oregon death-penalty laws for sheep-chasing dogs — and to

Andie Tucher is an associate editor at CJR. For three years ending in April 1996 she worked in a special-project unit at ABC News.

remind me that critics have their own agendas.

Of course they do. Some of the criticism does come from rivals at CBS and ABC, who fear that NBC may be taking over as the new top dog in the ratings war among the Big Three. From mid-December through mid-March, Brokaw’s half-hour evening broadcast consistently edged out — barely but visibly — the seven-year ratings leader, ABC’s *World News Tonight* with Peter Jennings, winning ten times, tying three, and placing second once in fourteen weeks. (During the week ending March 7, for instance, NBC had an 8.8 rating, an 18 share, and an average of 12.01 million viewers; ABC came in at 8.5/17 with 11.16 million viewers; and CBS at 7.6/16 with 9.95 million viewers.)

And this advance comes at a time when the market for network evening news is inexorably shrinking: throughout the 1970s, the three net-

work newscasts together would routinely attract up to three-quarters of the viewing audience, but Nielsen reports that the combined audience share for the three has now slipped under 50 percent.

But edgy rivals aside, Brokaw’s slicked-up newscast would still be ripe for reassessment. While all the networks have been tinkering with their programs, *The Nightly News* with Tom Brokaw has given itself an inside-and-out makeover. NBC’s broadcast now sports a hipper, more high-tech feel, with a new video-wall backdrop, Brokaw’s face in a monitor mirroring Brokaw’s face on Brokaw himself, Brokaw’s face appearing suddenly on the giant video screen overlooking Times Square as he signs off. Where once the airtime was full of congressional wrangles and Middle East peace talks, now it’s heavy with medical news and features from fly-over country. NBC has indeed gone

ILLUSTRATION: MOFFETT CECIL; RATHER: CRAIG BLANKENHORN/OUTLINE; BROKAW: NBC NEWS; JENNINGS: PETER JERNE/ABC NEWS

It's not your father's newscast anymore

Call it "News Lite" or "News you can use" — by whatever name, TV is racing for relevance. But what gets lost along the way?

News"

softer and more user-friendly — "populist," NBC executives like to call it — and Brokaw argues urgently that "what we're attempting to do is to cover the important news of the day and the news that is relevant to our viewers, and that news now has a much different woof and warp than it did twenty-five years ago."

Brokaw's competitors detect a betrayal of journalistic standards in all this. CBS anchor Dan Rather told *The Philadelphia Inquirer* in February that NBC was purveying "News Lite." In late March, when Paul Friedman, ABC's executive vice president for news, also took back his old job as the newscast's executive producer, he told *The Washington Post* that ABC would "cover serious news that the others can't manage."

But the old polarity between "soft" and "hard" news is itself something of a red herring. That's because NBC's *Nightly News* is not simply replacing

**POLITICIANS
AND TELEVISION
JOURNALISTS ALIKE
WANT YOU TO
KNOW THEY ARE
JUST FOLKS WHO
FEEL YOUR PAIN**

coverage of world events with traditional soft features on heroic rescues or celebrity comebacks. NBC's producers, not unlike their fellows at the other networks, have discovered that, in addition to the old categories of the news you need and the news you want, they can add a third type of news that's flourishing in the '90s: news about you

— news to use at your next doctor's visit, PTA meeting, or family dinner-table discussion.

The special problems of the network news in the '90s are legion. It's not just that many people are too busy, too cynical, or too turned off by public life to enjoy the evening-news habit. It's also that so many have been able to go elsewhere — and everywhere — for their news, from CNN to all-news radio to the Internet to local television news to tabloid TV to paid political ads, free political time, and even the late-night comedians, a favorite "news source" for a reported one-third of television-watchers under thirty, according to the Freedom Forum's Media Studies Center. "This is a fact of life," says ABC's Jennings. "I don't know how any evening news broadcast could now cast itself in such a way as to suddenly command the attention of vastly greater numbers of people."

What's more, the newscasts' core viewers tend to be older; The Pew Research Center reckons that almost two-thirds of people over sixty-four watch a network newscast "regularly," while less than a quarter of GenXers do. So "sooner or later the current news audience is all going to die," says Andrew Tyndall, editor of the *Tyndall Weekly*, which tracks and times the stories covered on the evening news. "And that's sooner rather than later."

In some fundamental ways the three newscasts haven't broken far from tradition — or from each other. All pay due attention to the obvious breaking stories: none could have been accused of ignoring either the verdict against O.J. Simpson or the death of Deng Xiaoping. After some initial foot-dragging all have recently been doing a "pretty good job" covering the hot political story of the day — the campaign fund-raising scandals — says Bill Hogan, director of investigative projects at The Center for Public Integrity in Washington, a watchdog group that monitors political spending.

All include, as they always have, bright bits of the "news you want" — softer stories like the return of *Star Wars* and mushy little tributes to Valentine's Day. And all air a weekly slate of regular segments, ranging from "Your Money" and "Eye on America" to the often lightweight, even gossamer "Travels with Harry" on CBS (correspondent Harry Smith visits the stars of girls' basketball) and "Person of the Week" (people who have made positive social contributions) on ABC.

But these days, all three networks are paying as much attention to health problems as any scriptwriter for *E.R.* During just the first two and a half months of 1997 a steady channel surfer through the three broadcasts would have been provided with "news you can use" about, among other topics, clot busters, osteoporosis, memory loss, macular degeneration, allergies, diabetes, male menopause, estrogen, blood transfusions, brain injuries, Alzheimer's, flu, antihistamines, panic attacks, arthritis, beta blockers, grapes as cancer fighters, uterine fibroids, obesity, drinking and driving, car-phoning and driving, and

mammograms. "The *New England Journal of Medicine* should be charging," says Sandy Socolow, a former executive producer for Walter Cronkite at CBS. "All three broadcasts are mesmerized by anything that involves the human body — and I'm not talking about sex."

What distinguishes NBC now is that both the gossamer and the useful often outweigh the grit. Its *Nightly News* tends to air fewer stories each evening

AN AD IN THE NEW YORK TIMES TOUTED THE EVENING'S HOTTEST STORY: "MARRIAGE 'BOOT CAMP': COULD IT SAVE YOUR RELATIONSHIP?"

than ABC or CBS, and far fewer of those come from the national capitals, whether Moscow, Belgrade, or, yes, Washington. More of them focus on trends, life-style and consumer issues, pop culture, and heartland America — and NBC isn't hiding its Lite under a bushel, either. An ad for the newscast appearing in *The New York Times* on March 28 touted what was obviously considered the evening's hottest story: "Marriage 'Boot Camp': Could it Save Your Relationship?" (The story was bumped by the news of the California cult suicide and actually aired April 4.)

Brokaw says he's simply "trying to be less of a wire service of the air" because it's clear people have already heard the major news of the day by the time they click on the evening news. "I travel across this country a lot," he says, "and everywhere I go I hear what people are talking about and what interests them and what they are desperate to know about. And a whole lot

of that has very little to do with what we would routinely put on the air ten-fifteen years ago."

Last year, according to Tyndall, viewers were apparently most desperate to know about the summer Olympics, which were broadcast by NBC Sports and which got more airtime on NBC News than any other story in 1996 (CBS's biggest story was TWA Flight 800 and ABC's was the Dole campaign, which included the entire primary season; see box). At the same time, NBC's attention to such hard-news topics as the presidential campaign and the Middle Eastern peace process was drastically lower than its competitors'.

And NBC has figured out the pleasures and profits of packaging. Tyndall calculates that during the first two and a half months of 1997, NBC gave over a total of 351 minutes of its weeknight broadcasts to named feature segments, compared with 197 minutes on CBS and 185 on ABC. On any given evening as much as a third or more of the twenty-two-minute news hole might be devoted to such segments. Some of the features were shorter specials like "Sleepless in America," "Starting Over" (on keeping New Year's resolutions), "The Plane Truth" (airline safety), or "Going Home" (NBC newsmen return to their roots); others were established regulars like "In Their Own Words," "In Depth," "The Family," "The Fleecing of America" (governmental and institutional corruption and waste), "The American Dream," and "Norman Schwarzkopf's America."

All this translates into a "potpourri," as Brokaw would have it, a "rich mix of different kinds of stories." It's a mix, anyway. In the first months of 1997 NBC's "In Depth" segment, which usually runs some three or four minutes, examined everything from finding jobs for welfare recipients to the aging process. Under the other labels came a jumble of the informative, the you-focused, and the fluffy: reports on the meaning of daydreams, the genealogy craze, absent fathers, oversupply rip-offs at the Pentagon, no-fault divorce, Debbie Reynolds's comeback, getting out of

debt, managing one's time, overcoming the fear of flying, coarse behavior among athletes, senior citizens on stage in Las Vegas, and how life has changed for women in Yankton, South Dakota (pop. 12,703), where Brokaw grew up.

The other networks have made changes that are similar, though somewhat smaller. As its own ratings trembled, ABC added a three-times-weekly "Solutions" segment in place of the eight-year-old "American Agenda," which had explored a wide range of issues in health, education, religion, and the environment. The new feature, introduced last September, also falls heavily into the utilitarian mold. It has focused on successful efforts around the country, many of them small in scale and private or local in scope, to address common problems and predicaments of daily life: how to cure chronic pain, find good day care, cut neighborhood crime, motivate children to learn, reduce accidents among teenage drivers.

"Solutions" has come in for its share of criticism, too. After the segment looked at cures for snoring, the *Wall Street Journal* television critic, Dorothy Rabinowitz, wrote savagely of a broadcast "that has begun confusing itself with a social agency whose mission it is to advise citizens on all manner of personal concerns."

Jennings maintains that "Solutions" marks no radical departure for the broadcast; it's simply a way to emphasize a feature that had already been an important and popular part of "American Agenda." "I think we're paying a little price because of what it's called," he says. The segment on snoring "would have been fine if it had been on 'Your Health.' It's a national problem and a thing we spend money on, and if we'd done it on 'Your Health' — well, Dorothy would just have waited for another one," Jennings continues, laughing.

"Our critics just don't like it because it's deemed to be pandering," he says. "But we get more response to 'Solutions' on the Internet than anything else we've ever done."

CBS's *Evening News*, meanwhile,

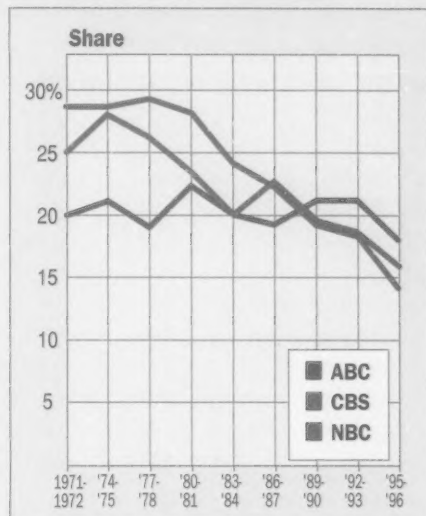
may be attributable to "bounce" from the network's other successes — the thriving thrice-weekly newsmagazine *Dateline*, the slick new cable-and-online partner MSNBC, and the hot prime-time schedule. And CBS is

quick to point out that some of its newscast's present weakness derives from intra-network "splat": CBS traded twenty-six affiliated stations with other networks after losing the broadcast rights to pro football, often ending up with weaker partner stations.

Dan Rather maintains that it's a "miracle" the *Evening News* is doing as well as it is in the face of the network's crumbled delivery system. "Because we have a reputation for being a hard-news outfit, we manage to stay in the hunt," he says. "I believe if we go the soft-news route we fall farther behind. I don't hear anybody among our viewers complaining that we run too much foreign news. I do find viewers complaining when we run something they feel is a waste of their time — like a soft feature."

CBS's lineup does indeed include noticeably more international stories than the other two newscasts. Last year the *Evening News* spent more time than either competitor on both Bosnia and the Middle Eastern conflict. It has aired a series of pieces by Bob Simon on the adjustments to black rule in South Africa, and no other network had a correspondent filing reports from Albania weeks before the country imploded in mid-March. But CBS, too, airs such small-focus features as "The Class of 2000" on teenagers' lives, and it has certainly done its bit for the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Nielsen's Numbers: How the Three Network Evening Newscasts Have Scored with U.S. Audiences, 1971-1996



Audience share, shown above, measures the percentage of the households *actually* watching television that was tuned to each program. Ratings, listed below, take *potential* viewers into account, showing the percentage of all households with television tuned to each program. Years run from September to April. In '95-'96 a single ratings point represented 959,000 U.S. households.

Rating

	1971-1972	'74-'75	'77-'78	'80-'81	'83-'84	'86-'87	'89-'90	'92-'93	'95-'96
ABC	9.6	11.1	9.9	12.6	11.1	10.7	11.0	11.3	8.6
CBS	14.7	15.0	15.1	15.4	13.8	12.1	10.1	9.8	7.2
NBC	12.9	14.4	13.6	13.2	11.2	12.1	9.9	9.4	8.1

after dominating the airwaves for years as the newscast of the "Tiffany" network, slid into third place in the ratings after Larry Tisch's cost-cutting years of the late '80s. Ratings don't always tell the whole story, of course. Some of NBC *Nightly News*'s current strength

As the newscasts continue to warm up and soften up, it's easy to romanticize the golden age when television news did, supposedly, have a soul. It's never been entirely, unrelentingly devoted to "hard" news: on a single randomly selected evening

in 1971, CBS gave five minutes to Charles Kuralt's visit to a rally of Airstream-trailer fanciers and NBC's David Brinkley bade a leisurely welcome to spring.

And sometimes the evening news mistook ponderousness for heft. There was that hot night in August 1977 when ABC and NBC led their broadcasts with the death of Elvis Presley and the Tiffany network began with six minutes on an event it considered more newsworthy: negotiations over the Panama Canal Treaty. "A lot of the foreign coverage ten years ago was deathly dull," says Tyndall. "A lot of the vaunted foreign news coverage that NBC is *not* now doing used to be Marvin Kalb reading a press release from the secretary of state."

But critics point to other artifacts of the golden age that now seem just as quaint as an Airstream. "In the good old days you never even raised the issue of cost," says Marty Koughan, a sixteen-year veteran of CBS News who is now the executive producer for Mother Jones Television, "and if you raised the question of ratings you were mocked. At *CBS Reports* I worked on an hour on litigation in America — just try that today."

Sandy Socolow remembers when a sort of intellectual elitism was considered not just normal among newspeople, but healthy. "The mandate used to be to tell people what they needed to know — but they often don't know what they need to know until someone tells them," he says. "The newspaper's job is to hunch out what's important, what's significant, and to *make* that interesting."

But that, says Brokaw, is exactly what's changed — the sense of what's really important to people — and a broadcast that doesn't notice isn't going to last long. "One of the things that I want not to happen is for us to all commit suicide," he says. Everything from education to the automobile busi-

ness has also been changing, and "they could have been rigid and said 'I don't want to be demeaning to the institution,' and they'd have gotten left behind."

Brokaw could have added the rest of the press to his list of evolving institutions, too, as it grapples with the glut of information and what surveys suggest is an unshakable resistance among most of the audience to serious, "hard" news. The print press, long since displaced as the medium of first resort by the evening newscasts and more

So, the argument goes, why should the newscasts be exempt from reorienting themselves as best they can, too? Why should the public require this one medium to be stuck with playing Norma Desmond when everyone else gets to be Madonna?

One reason is precisely that: everyone else *is* doing it. If the goal is really to give people news they haven't already heard, it's hard to believe that without NBC on the case, viewers would never find out that families work better if Dad's around or that not get-

ting a good night's sleep can be bad for your health. The more any broadcast strives to be "not your father's evening news," the more indistinguishable it is from the "everything else" that is its most feared competition — the local television news, the tabloid shows and newsmagazines, the slick print magazines, Oprah, even the late-night comedians.

Yet there's a larger question at stake here, too, one that goes well beyond any critique rooted in Tyndall's numbers of minutes devoted

to this or that. It's a question of the mood, the tone, the underlying message of the stories that do make air — and of the ones that don't. How long can an evening news program emphasize the fulfillment of viewers' needs, work to provide exactly what they are "desperate" to hear — and continue to function as a *national* newscast at all?

No one will argue that news about helping your child do better in school is less worthy on some cosmic scale than yet more news about Bosnia, or that it's not a journalist's business to give your sister the information she needs to discover her breast cancer early. If the evening news once had room for all those Panama Canal negotiations, it should certainly be able to find some place for stories of more immediate human interest.

Nor will anyone contend that the newscasts have entirely given up on stories that connect viewers to a larger

TOP 10 EVENING-NEWS STORIES OF 1996

	Total Minutes	ABC	CBS	NBC
1. TWA Flight 800 crash	363	105	141	117
2. Bob Dole campaign	338	120	122	95
3. Yugoslavia war	301	117	134	49
4. O.J. Simpson trial	252	72	89	92
5. Israeli-Palestinian conflict	244	88	104	52
6. Whitewater investigations	216	78	82	55
7. Atlanta Olympic games	207	39	28	140
8. ValuJet Flight 592 crash	184	48	61	74
9. GOP San Diego convention	178	62	68	49
10. Bull market	174	54	59	61

Source: ADT Research/Andrew Tyndall.
Subtotals may not add up due to rounding.

recently by the omnipresent CNN and C-SPAN, has for years been adapting by substituting service stories, lifestyle features, and analysis for the urgent scoop. The "newspaper of record," *The New York Times*, now puts on its front page leisurely stories about the plight of bored wealthy Russian wives or the overelaborate caution labels on, for instance, children's Batman capes. The muckraking bimonthly *Mother Jones* recently started a health column. And the best-selling issue on domestic newsstands for both *Time* and *Newsweek* in 1996 was devoted to new interpretations of the life of Jesus. Among *Newsweek's* top ten covers only number nine, on the crash of TWA Flight 800, was pegged to a breaking news story. Other top sellers featured John F. Kennedy's new wife ("Carolyn Style"), gay parenting, the cartoon character Dilbert on why "Work is Hell," and "The Biology of Beauty."

world than their own home or community, introducing them to issues they didn't necessarily know they didn't know about. Everything from ABC's backgrounder on a Supreme Court religious-freedom case involving the rebuilding of a church, to CBS's exploration of China's intentions in Hong Kong, to NBC's look at the debate over executing a mentally ill criminal in Texas has managed to do that.

But the danger is very real now that as any national newscast edges closer in tone and subject to local-news and newsmagazine programs, it will make more of its journalistic decisions and consume more of its twenty-two minutes based on local-news and newsmagazine standards. That it will choose personal relevance instead of national importance, it will prefer soft soap to hard truths, and, given a choice between raising ratings and raising hell, it will look up and not down.

It's already happening. Take foreign news. From January 1 to mid-March, the civil war in Zaire, the second largest country in sub-Saharan Africa, was almost entirely off the map for every one of the network newscasts. And on March 13, after marine helicopters moved in to evacuate several hundred Americans from Albania, Brokaw led his broadcast with a dramatic description of the "meltdown" in a country whose name had first been breathed on the weeknight newscast just the previous evening. The chaotic little country had, apparently, been of no interest whatsoever without an American angle.

While some of this inattention to foreign news obviously reflects the end of cold-war tensions, much of it is also clearly due to fear — of low ratings and high cost. Brokaw, while arguing that NBC has not missed a major foreign story, also bluntly points out that when Bryant Gumbel took *Today* to black Africa and did "a really distinguished piece of work," it got "almost no ratings." In consequence, he says, "I knew immediately it would be harder for us to go back to Africa ourselves."

Or consider political news. For all their emphasis on clot busters and mammograms, all three newscasts

have just about forgotten an entire class of sick people whose plight was a hot topic four years ago when Clinton proposed his health-care reform measures — those who are uninsured.

Even the biggest stories are often smaller than they used to be. In June 1991 ABC's *World News Tonight* went on the air with a huge project: every night for two weeks it devoted at least one significant segment to examining child poverty — its causes, consequences, and possible remedies. Throughout the late '80s NBC devoted

WHY SHOULD THE PUBLIC REQUIRE THE EVENING NEWS TO BE STUCK WITH PLAYING NORMA DESMOND WHEN EVERYONE ELSE GETS TO BE MADONNA?

its "Special Segment," sometimes lasting as long as five or six minutes, to topics like the loss of the rain forests, racism in the military, and — for two weeks — a look at the lives of Vietnamese citizens and Vietnam veterans a decade after the fall of Saigon.

But ABC's big project this spring resonated much differently. Throughout the entire month of March *World News Tonight* joined with ABC's entertainment and sports divisions to focus on one question: how parents can talk to children about drugs. It is a topic of great concern, of course, but one with a very circumscribed focus — on *you*, *your* family, *your* children, not someone else's who may be in need. And while Brokaw defends NBC's regular "Fleeing of America" segment as "an investigative piece in the richest old mainline tradition of journalism," its title betrays its preoccupation with investigating only a

pinched and personal victimology: how the government is out to cheat *you*.

Like everything else, the evening news goes through cycles and fashions, and this trend, too, will doubtless cycle on. "The evening news is not this font of perceived wisdom that our critics say we think we are," says Jennings. "We are another institution on the national playing field and we respond in some considerable measure to how the really powerful institutions in the country operate — the executive branch, the Congress, the Pentagon, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in the old days the CIA.

"There are tons of people out there," Jennings goes on, "who say 'Well, just do this, do that, you should be doing this, you shouldn't be doing that.' But journalism is nothing if not a rolling experiment. We get up every day trying to figure out what is relevant to people in the country, and we very often don't know the answer in any immediate sense."

In fact the trend toward the personalizing and softening of news is very much a response to — if not an outright imitation of — the way other "really powerful institutions in the country" have themselves been working to woo an alienated and restive public.

Between the politicians who won in the last election and the warmed-up segments of the evening news, the parallels are particularly striking. Like the journalists, the politicians have focused on small, personalized promises of a better life, not for your country, but for you and your family: Airplane flights without butterflies! Time off from work for PTA meetings! A good night's sleep for all!

Both talk in the cadences of a manufactured populism that replaces the inspiring tones of leadership with a comforting patois of service and infotainment. Politicians and television journalists alike want us to know they are just folks like us, just folks who understand our concerns, just folks who feel our pain, just folks who know what we're desperate to hear.

And what might get enough votes — or ratings points — to win. ♦

Pete Hamill

by Bruce Porter

As usual the tie had disappeared, the feet were up on the desk, the glasses nestled on top of a head of fading red hair, and in between biting large chunks out of a mozzarella-and-tomato hero dripping with Tuscan olive oil, Pete Hamill was doing one of the things he enjoys most, which is spinning out a romance concerning the newspaper business. "At some point everybody sits around talking late at night and dreaming up the perfect paper," he was saying. "Usually, it's 'Goddammit, these idiots don't know how to run this thing. If we could get our hands on it we'd know what to do.' We all felt editors were trimming the best lines out of stories, or didn't recognize stories staring them in the face, or were filling the paper with stuff that was boring. There had to be a paper somewhere on which all the reporters were fabulous, all the writing was great, where the layout was slam-bang and elegant at the same time, and where people couldn't wait to get up in the morning and read it, and after you read it you felt you were not going to be the same again. We called it 'God's Paper.'"

Four years ago Hamill had a crack at playing out his fantasy, courtesy of the shady investor Steven Hoffenberg, sentenced in March to twenty years in prison, who had tried to bring the raggedy *New York Post* out of receivership. Hoffenberg hired him to remake the paper, if not exactly into something ordained in heaven, at least into one that could shake free of bankruptcy court. Hamill's sojourn lasted a bare five weeks, during which he led a staff insurrection against the owners, got fired for his insolence not once but twice, and ended up editing the paper from a diner down the street, in solidarity with editors who had been fired. The episode ended when Rupert Murdoch showed up to buy the *Post* a second time around, and advised Hamill that he could

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wakes up the Daily News

write a column if he chose but that his editing days were history.

However much New Yorkers relish a good uproar, the *Post* fiasco didn't seem at all a suitable swan song for one of the town's favorite journalists, known for his sometimes eloquent newspaper columns, his feature pieces from around the world for *Esquire* and other magazines, his eight novels, three nonfiction books, and screenplays. Then, miracle of miracles, last January, at age sixty-one, Hamill got a second chance. Mortimer Zuckerman, the real-estate-developer-cum-media-mogul, asked him to take over as editor-in-chief of the country's first and foremost tabloid, the New York *Daily News*. Unlike some other ideas Zuckerman has floated — one being his plan for a mammoth office building on Manhattan's Columbus Circle that would have thrown a shadow over a chunk of Central Park — his choice of Hamill instantly struck just about everyone concerned as a terrific idea. "I think it will be one of the great partnerships of all time, the most important one since Katharine Graham and Ben Bradlee," effused the publicist John Scanlon, an old buddy of both Hamill and Zuckerman who ends a lot of his sentences with exclamation points.

The *News* Hamill was called on to edit, however, bore little resemblance to the *News* of yore, or lore — that brash, tough-guy tabloid of the '40s and '50s, its reporters shooting questions out the side of their mouths, always plunking for the little guy against the swells and the privileged. For one thing, the paper had moved, vacated its wondrous Art Deco headquarters on East Forty-second Street, whose lobby drew crowds of tourists to the elaborate weather instruments, the giant revolving globe. Home now was an anonymous office building at Thirty-third Street and Tenth Avenue on Manhattan's far West Side, its look-at-nothing windows positioned high off the floor, giving the newsroom staff the feeling of working in a high-rise basement. And the reporters and editors were a little short on brashness, having weathered too many bitter years and bad times.

Starting in the late '80s, the paper was continually threatened with a shutdown by its Chicago parent, Tribune Co., then sold to the British press baron Robert Maxwell, who bled it of cash to float his other enterprises and drowned at sea, an apparent suicide, just before the *News*, too, sank into bankruptcy. While the courts were sorting things out, the paper endured a vitriolic five-month strike that pitted reporter against reporter and ended in early 1993 when Zuckerman took over as publisher. He crushed the guild by isolating it from the other unions, humiliat-

**"IF WE DO THIS RIGHT
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—HAMILL

ed the reporters by making all of them re-apply for their jobs, then hired back only about two-thirds of the newsroom. "Before Pete came it was very hard for people who had worked here for a long time to have ambition anymore," says Jim Dwyer, a Pulitzer Prize winner who came over after the death of *New York Newsday* and ranks as the paper's number one columnist. "For me personally, on a day to day basis, it was as if a spiritual extinction was happening."

Added to the pain inflicted by its owners, the personality of the paper had also been twisted out of shape by the editors. Instead of hiring Hamill the first time around, Zuckerman chose a Brit named Martin Dunn from Rupert Murdoch's *Boston Herald* to lead the *News* in its do-or-die battle against the *Post* and *New York Newsday*. During his three-year tenure, Dunn employed a mix of stunts and celebrity-chasing to stabilize the *News*'s circulation at around 740,000, not

up to its million-plus of the 1980s, but no longer plunging, and some 300,000 more than that of the rival *Post*. In the process, however, the paper relaxed its notable dedication to local news coverage and began lurching after the stuff traditionally staked out by the supermarket tabloids. Genuine stories got nudged aside by the antics of the royal family, Michael Jackson, and the ever-present Donald Trump; goings-on in the outer boroughs made the front of the paper only if they added measurably to the day's carnage.

Not only that, but longtime readers detected a certain meanness in its pages. In one instance, the paper posted a large photograph on page one, for all his relatives and friends to see, of a fifty-two-year-old highly respected police commander whom the NYPD had reluctantly and quietly cashiered for showing up to work still inebriated after a late-night fund-raiser for a seriously ill officer. In another, a reporter was sent to flag down ten taxicabs and in each one, as a test of the driver's honesty, leave behind a wallet containing a hundred-dollar bill along with some identification. To absolutely no one's surprise, eight of the targeted cabbies chalked up the discovery as being their lucky day and slipped the C-note into their pockets. "The *Daily News* always pricked the compositeness of the mighty," says Tom Robbins, its chief investigative reporter, "But suddenly the paper went from 'Tell it to Sweeney' to 'Stick it to Sweeney.'"

No more. Hamill knows his Sweeneys too well for that. The first-born of an Irish couple who had immigrated from Belfast in the 1920s, Hamill grew up one of eight siblings in a threadbare household on the fourth floor of a tenement in Brooklyn's then working-class Park Slope, and bore painful witness to the many ways in which poverty can set people apart. As detailed in his best-selling memoir, *A Drinking Life*, he trailed his old man into the saloons starting at age eight. After earning admission to Regis High School, the first-rank Catholic school in the city, he got taunted for his mean clothes and the way his mother would keep putting fresh cardboard into his

SARA BARRETT

shoes to cover over the holes. Dropping out, he joined the peacetime Navy, and, after a few knock-around years, including a try at painting (art has been a lifelong Hamill passion), he was hired at age twenty-five as a nightside legman on the old *New York Post*.

This was the paper of publisher Dolly Schiff, of the famous editorialist Jimmy Wechsler, its star columnist being Murray Kempton, Nora Ephron about to launch her career as a feature writer. But the lessons that struck home to Hamill were handed down by the paper's executive editor, a curious anomaly named Paul Sann, now deceased. A Jewish guy from the Bronx who never attended college, Sann confronted the world with the manner and permanent grimace of Humphrey Bogart, outfitted in black, with western belts and cowboy boots, and he saw in the young Hamill a kid from the streets a lot like himself. "I never had that conversation with him where you ask, 'Why'd you pick me and not some other guy?'" says Hamill. "But he had a thing in his head that he would make a project out of me, the point being that these journalism schools don't know what they're doing, and that you can make a reporter out of someone without sending them to college."

Mainly it was lean writing that Sann taught, short and to the point. "Give me active verbs," he'd say. "The verbs are the Teamsters; they get the nouns to the market." Or I'd hand in a story where I'd been throwing a million words at the thing, and he'd say, "This isn't bad but, for Chrissake, you don't have to leave the English language for dead." He was tough, but always encouraging; when you're young and uncertain, he was one of those people you needed who made you believe you could actually do this stuff."

As Hamill applied Sann's dictums to his own writing, so now he's passing them along to his captive audience of young reporters as part of the renewal he hopes to generate at the *Daily News*. "I think if we do this right everyone's going to want to read this paper, and everyone in the newspaper business is going to want to work here. Well, maybe not everyone, maybe only every young kid, which is just as good."

First, he's been busy getting rid of the "rewritese" — that's what Sann called it — those cliché newspaper phrases the reader can write for himself because he's



Publisher Zuckerman

light, where you can really see it? I mean, think of the light in Edward Hopper, think of the light in Vermeer.' 'In broad daylight' is like 'strife-torn Bosnia.' I mean, what the hell is 'strife,' anyway? This sort of stuff is nothing I can make a speech to the whole staff about. I can only do this going door to door, take my time going around, and when people do it right, let them know."

And color, he wants to get color back into the *Daily News*: "I want these young reporters to be able to write in a way that reflects what you hear, provide a sense of smell and taste, because the reporters are going where the vast majority of readers can't go. They have to do the hard news story first, phone that in to rewrite, but then they have to stay and look for something else. I mean, 'The body was lying on the floor, and the blood dripped over the second step, and there was a packet of Kents in his pocket.' It's the detail you want, the things that you can't catch at all on TV, the odors and the sounds."

And those vacuous stories about celebrities, let's eighty-six all that stuff. "There was a certain amount of nose-pressed-to-the-window reporting that I want out. I mean I don't think we should stand in awe of Ivana Trump's yacht! In fact, I don't know why such people are in the paper. I keep thinking of news as a verb. Nouns are important, but the nouns must do something." In late March, Hamill dismissed two gossip columnists and filled in their "Hot Copy" column with legitimate news stories.

In several other ways the new *News* already appears dramatically different

heard them so often. "A reporter here recently used 'in broad daylight,'" says Hamill, "and I told her, 'Think about this phrase. Have you ever heard of narrow daylight? Wouldn't it be better to use a concrete description of the

"THERE'S A WHOLE MARKET NOW CONCERNED WITH PRICE AND VALUE, CATERING TO THE AVERAGE MIDDLE-CLASS MAN AND WOMAN, AND THESE HAPPEN TO BE OUR READERS"

—ZUCKERMAN

from the old. Zuckerman has invested \$165 million in a modern printing plant in New Jersey, soon to turn out thirty-two pages of the paper in color, and already the pictures are crisp, the type no longer schmutzes all over the page — a major fix for a paper that often had the appearance of having been fished out of a garbage can. As for content, Hamill right away hastened the departure of the two Brits running the Sunday entertainment section, who in his opinion had filled the pages with "press agent schlock." In their stead he promoted a sprightly Irish green-carder named Orla Healy, who, before Hamill got to the *News*, had created the paper's "Thersday" women's section, using actual

Daily News readers as clothing models instead of agency beanpoles. In one of her revamped Sunday departments, entitled "City Smarts," she also gets readers to test products and report on what they find, occasionally at some small cost to themselves. After

experimenting with a \$30 gizmo with which women are supposed to heat their eyelashes to make them curl upward, two readers reported that their lashes disappeared completely when the thing singed them to a crisp.

Hamill also seems to have sealed the independence of the paper's news side from interference by publisher Zuckerman, who in the past has micromanaged his properties from his aqua-tinted skyscraper in midtown Manhattan — bothering editors over the phone about what stories to run, hiring people underneath them with whom they often didn't get along. "A lot of people live in fear of the man," says one veteran *News* reporter. "The great thing about Pete Hamill is that no matter what happens to him at the *News*, he doesn't need Mort Zuckerman to become Pete Hamill again."

Gone is the paper's previous go-slow attitude concerning negative stories about Mayor Rudy Giuliani, one of Zuckerman's models of civic leadership. On just one day in February, page 1 contained a blistering attack on Giuliani from former Mayor David Dinkins; page 6 ran an exposé about the thousands of phone calls

Giuliani's police commissioner, Howard Safir, had made at taxpayer expense on his cellular telephone when he was the fire commissioner; and on page 7 was an investigative piece showing that, since the mayor's election, the law firm of one of his major supporters had increased its client list of lobbyists doing business with the city by more than twentyfold. Says reporter Robbins, who wrote the lobbyist story: "We all looked at the *News* that day and felt, 'Wow, it's hard to believe this is the same paper!'"

As a former star columnist himself for three New York tabloids, practitioner of the so-called "reported column" popularized by Jimmy Breslin, Hamill has also advanced the careers of writers who do a lot of digging at the scene rather than just vent their attitudes. As an antidote, for instance, to the often-mawkish Mike McAlary and his set pieces on shot cops and firemen's funerals, Hamill took a perceptive thirty-four-

year old sportswriter/novelist named Mark Kriegel and set him up with a column on the news side. In March, after the shooting death of Biggie Smalls in Los Angeles, Kriegel put a human face on the gangsta rapper by finding old pals on the streets of black New York who remembered him in a softer mode, singing in front of the corner laundry for \$5 a pop.

Hamill, who with his wife, Fukiko Aoki, a writer for Japanese publications, moved down from his country place into an apartment in the funky Chelsea Hotel, has also lifted the *News*'s depressing view of city life. "There was too much writing stuck to me in the years of the Crack Plague — too many cop stories, too much bleak writing that made you feel no hope. In fact, the city itself, as you walked the streets, had a positive feeling to it that it hadn't had in a long time." Rather than dead babies and wife murders, Page One is now more likely to be filled with the city's winner in the Westinghouse Science Fair or Jackie Robinson's fiftieth anniversary as a breakthrough Brooklyn Dodger.

Or a little humor. In one issue, it displayed the large photograph of a traffic

jam in the Bronx — caused by a fire hydrant that, incredibly enough, had been situated in the middle of a busy thoroughfare several days before the lane was supposed to have been closed to accommodate an expansion of the sidewalk. The headline: DUH!

In addition, the paper has busied itself chasing down a whole population group that all three New York papers had largely ignored. This is the roughly 30 percent of the city's people who qualify as "new" immigrants — the Russians, Eastern Europeans, Chinese, Koreans, East Indians, Arabs, Turks, Mexicans, Dominicans. "Just when you think you have this town figured out," says Hamill,

**"THE IMMIGRANTS AND
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azine aimed at Caribbean readers, and appointed an editor to coordinate coverage in every major ethnic community. Not all the stories are exactly positive. For a multipart series this spring, he freed up the paper's organized-crime team of Gene Mustain and Jerry Capecci to track a cell of ex-convicts from the Soviet Union to America, where they set themselves up as the epicenter of the Russian Mafia. More often, though, the paper has been focusing on the ones who get trampled in their struggle for some better grip on the good life. And on more than one occasion, its ethnic-beat reporters have come up with scoops.

Last month reporter Ying Chan, who's since left the paper for a job with a journalism foundation, got an exclusive, a long-distance interview from parts unknown with Charlie Trie, the former Little Rock restaurateur and Friend of Bill who is wanted for questioning by at least two congressional panels about his major and allegedly questionable fund raising for the Democratic party. Trie, who risks contempt of Congress, told Chan, in English and in Chinese, that he wasn't coming

back to the United States. "I don't care any more," he told her. "Who is helping me? Nobody."

As a business proposition, however, targeting New York's wretched refuse doesn't quite accord with conventional wisdom in the advertising world. "Journalistically, it's admirable, but whether or not it will pay off is a large question," says John Morton, the newspaper analyst. "It's very difficult talking about this without sounding like an elitist, but local advertisers aren't convinced these are the people they want to reach very badly. Who they really want are the readers of *The New York Times* or *Newsday*."

Morton, as it happens, has been forecasting the death of the *News* for years; and, according to publisher Zuckerman, his view of the situation happens to be a little myopic. Because the paper isn't publicly owned, Zuckerman doesn't have to furnish accompanying proof, but he insists that advertising lineage is up by 50 percent since he took over and that at last the *News* is turning a modest profit. As a significant reason, he points to the recent arrival in the city of cheap, large-volume department stores, such as Kmart and Caldor's, and plans by Sears to open 110 new stores throughout the city and the state, all of which indicates to him that *Daily News* readers are in for a new level of courting. "There's a whole market now concerned with price and value, catering to the average middle-class man and

woman," says Zuckerman, who also owns *The Atlantic Monthly* and *U.S. News & World Report*. "And these happen to be our readers."

From where Hamill views it, this is also the audience that can return the paper to



Reporter Robbins

its glory days, get it back up over the million-circulation mark. "In terms of the long run it's gotta be the immigrants and their children — that's our future," he says. "In the process of our writing about them, they're going to realize that we are the newspaper of all the American papers that they should begin to read. If we can get that job done, and do it with some sort of humor and style and verve, I think we can put out the greatest goddamn tabloid there ever was." ♦

FALLOUT FROM DETROIT



FROM A BRUTAL STRIKE, BITTER LESSONS AND LASTING LOSSES

by Don Gonyea and
Mike Hoyt

There is a scene in the movie *Braveheart* of a battlefield after the fighting is done. Though it was a part of an honorable and important struggle, this particular battle was marked by ineptitude, betrayal, greed, and costly false assumptions. Dead men and animals litter the ground; horrified wives and lost children wander aimlessly; the wails of the abandoned and the angry fill the ears. It's a waste. It's a little like the newspaper strike in Detroit.

Don Gonyea is a reporter for National Public Radio in Detroit. Mike Hoyt is a senior editor at CJR.

It ended on Valentine's Day, 583 days after it began, a strike by six unions against Gannett's *Detroit News* and Knight-Ridder's *Detroit Free Press*, and against the single business entity that has run them since 1989 under a joint operating agreement, or JOA. True to form, the two sides did not agree on the terms of the peace. The unions, which led nearly 2,500 people to the streets on July 13, 1995, acknowledged that the walkout no longer made sense. They would continue to push for contracts, but they wanted to come back to work. Immediately.

Al Derey, the teamster who led the union coalition, made the announcement about "this bold move," as he put it, his voice cracking. Derey portrayed the back-to-work offer as a strategy: should

the full National Labor Relations Board eventually agree with its regional director's contention that the papers failed to bargain in good faith, the papers could be liable for back pay dating from the Valentine's Day return-to-work offer. Management and the unions do not agree on how much per day that back pay amounts to, but the unions see a steadily mounting figure as an incentive for management to resolve the issue rather than tying it up in court.

Management said it welcomed the unions' announcement, but at the same time reaffirmed that the 1,400 replacement workers brought in to keep the papers publishing during the strike have permanent jobs. Thus the strikers would be called back only very slowly, when

DAYMON HARTLEY

vacancies in the current work force occurred, and on management's terms. (Seven weeks after the strikers agreed to return, 161 of them had been offered and had accepted jobs.)

No good, said the unions. To get all the people back inside who want to go back, they have vowed to continue to ask readers not to buy the papers and advertisers not to advertise in them — extending a drive that has already cost Detroit Newspapers, the JOA agency, dearly. On the unions' telephone, "strike headquarters" has become "lockout headquarters."

So the strike may be over, but no one could argue that labor peace has arrived.

WINNERS AND LOSERS

It would be hard to argue, too, that anybody really won.

The unions, which suffered embarrassment and frustration in a town where they name highways after labor leaders, lost big. Those who return to work have no contract. Some will never return. As of early April, some 500 fewer full-time non-editorial people were working for Detroit Newspapers than were working the day before the strike. In the newsrooms, the *News* and *Free Press* were down 25 and 40, respectively, from 300 and 327.

The company has eliminated a stroke work rules put in place over the years, often as compensation for jobs lost to new technologies. "Overnight, the unions handed Detroit Newspapers the elimination of work rules and overmanning — stuff that would have taken ten years to get at the bargaining table," says John Morton, the newspaper-stock analyst. "Going on strike was one of the dumbest things the unions could do."

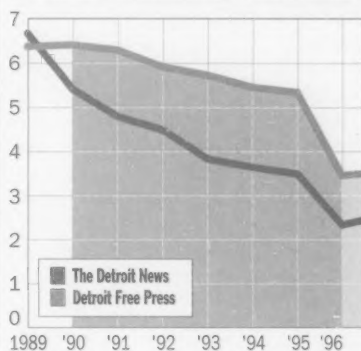
About half the 500 editorial employees represented by the Newspaper Guild local crossed the line and returned before the strike wound down. It is hard to find anybody associated with the struggle who is left unmarked. "How wrenching this was for people — you can't overwrite that part of it," says a former striker. He eventually crossed the picket line.

Prices of Gannett and Knight-Ridder stock remained high throughout, climbing right along with other newspaper stocks. The market shrugged off losses in a pair of papers that may be big but are dwarfed by the size of their owners (Gannett has ninety-one dailies, Knight-Ridder thirty-five, once its recent purchases (see page 14) are final; both have other holdings). And to some extent the

market may have cheered the labor efficiencies that result from the chains' success in imposing their will.

But the management side bled as well. Circulation had already taken a sickening drop since the JOA began in November 1989. That was partly because, in the agreement to become a single business entity and halt head-to-head competition, the *News* gave up its morning slot and, like afternoon papers everywhere, began to weaken (see chart). Once the strike and circulation boycott began, readership went into free fall. It has apparently leveled out this year, according to unaudited figures, at a combined total of about 600,000 — less than half the combined circulation of the two papers before they joined forces under the JOA. The *Detroit News* and the *Detroit Free Press* were numbers 9 and

THAT SINKING FEELING



Circulation data are from audited reports by the Audit Bureau of Circulations for the twelve months ending March 31 of each year, except for the 1996 figures. For the year ending March 31, 1996, only the final three months were audited. The light area at the right of the chart shows unaudited circulation figures from April 1 through September 30, 1996. The two papers were separately owned until November 1989, when their JOA took effect. As part of that agreement the *News* became an afternoon newspaper.

10 in the nation in circulation in the 1989 *Editor & Publisher* listing; as of spring 1997 the *News* is number 43 and the *Free Press* is 21. Many of those lost readers are likely gone for good.

And many advertisers, too. The *New York Times* reported that Detroit Newspapers' revenues are down 15 percent. The unions think the figure is much higher, since some companies that do advertise have told union activists that they push for deep discounts to reflect lower circulation. Analysts have put the total strike loss for the papers at more than \$100 million; the unions put the figure at \$250 million.

There is no way to put a dollar figure on the intangibles — credibility and goodwill in Detroit, where the newspapers faced criticism from civic and religious leaders. Some working-class neighborhoods are still dotted with lawn signs reading NO NEWS OR FREE PRESS WANTED HERE and cars all over the roads still bear bumper stickers reading NO SCAB PAPERS.

As Robert G. Picard and Stephen Lacy, journalism professors at, respectively, California State University and Michigan State University, put it in an article for *Newspaper Research Journal*: "Technology now allows a company to keep a newspaper open during a strike, but technology also provides readers and advertisers with substitutes. The newspaper can publish, but if large numbers of readers and advertisers leave, the long-term costs of the strike can exceed the short-term gains. If managers continue to hold the mistaken belief that all they have to do is keep a newspaper open, labor and management will find themselves locked in a struggle that ruins them both."

SETTING THE TABLE

The dynamics that drove the strike started well before anyone sat down to bargain in 1995. To a large extent, they flowed out of expectations and perceptions about the joint operating agreement that Knight-Ridder and Gannett applied for in 1986 and finally won in 1989.

The JOA was a controversial application of a controversial law, the 1970 Newspaper Preservation Act, which essentially allows a city's competing newspapers an exemption from antitrust law on the ground that such an exemption is necessary to preserve two editorial voices. The papers combined business operations, which Gannett controls with a three-to-two vote, while running separate newsrooms. Critics argue that the primary goal is actually the cost-cutting and price-hiking that monopoly allows. Monopoly, says analyst Morton, "is big money. When there are two newspapers in a city, typically one is pretty profitable — 10 percent to 15 percent — and the other not profitable. But a big-city single newspaper can easily do a 25 percent profit margin. And even with a JOA, where you have to publish two newspapers, you can come close to that."

But this pot of gold has proved elusive in Detroit, and the pursuit of it seems almost to bring a curse.

The rivalry between the stolid, conser-

vative *News* and the liberal, feisty *Free Press* is the stuff of journalism legend. By 1986, when Gannett and Knight-Ridder applied for their JOA, the two papers had beaten each other to a pulp. Both were losing money for many reasons, not least the cheap advertising and subscription rates (15 cents a copy for the *News*, 20 cents for the *Free Press*) that the papers had been using for several years to try to kill each other off.

The law on JOAs requires one of the papers to be labeled as "failing," and the *Free Press* was so designated. But Justice Department lawyers were suspicious. As one of them told Bryan Gruley — for his fascinating and well-documented book about the Detroit JOA, *Paper Losses* — "It was absolutely clear that there were tons of red ink being spilled on those two newspapers' books, but it looked awfully voluntary. It looked like it was a conscious, rational decision" to lose enough to qualify for a JOA.

The unions bitterly opposed the JOA at first, fearing job losses and journalistic retreat, and getting it approved took three and a half hard years. The administrative law judge assigned to the case recommended against it; Attorney General Edwin Meese III overruled him; Meese's approval, challenged, squeaked past the U.S. Supreme Court in the fall of 1989 with a four-four deadlock. But, finally, the money would roll in, wouldn't it?

When the stock analyst John Reidy predicted a 1991 JOA operating profit of \$112 million, Gruley writes, the always-humble Allen H. Neuharth, then the c.e.o. of Gannett, took issue: "What Reidy forgot is that the governance of the Detroit Newspaper Agency is in the hands of the Gannett Company by a three-to-two margin, and 16 percent operating margins are simply not acceptable at the Gannett Company. So, while we appreciate the specifics and the interest, John, we suggest that you revise your numbers upward."

It was Neuharth, it turns out, who had to revise more numbers. Analyst Morton blames the tough newspaper recession that started in 1990; others blame some awful mismanagement: "The nation's two largest and most powerful newspaper chains appear to be accomplishing the impossible," Joseph B. White wrote in *The Wall Street Journal* in 1990, "having a monopoly, and blowing it anyway." The JOA made no profit at all — until 1994, the year before the strike.

WHY I WORKED



Steve Byrne, 28, a replacement worker, is an assistant features editor at the Free Press. He previously worked for The Journal Gazette, in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

The *Free Press* was the paper that I had read all my life, growing up in Michigan. I was talking to them before the strike, in June '95; I had no idea that labor problems were on the horizon. When I came back from vacation in August, they called me.

I was split. My overall philosophy is fairly libertarian and individualistic. My concern was: Is this a fight that is not my fight? Should I be getting involved? I got a job offer shortly after the interview, and I had to make up my mind within a few days. I made my decision at the very last minute. I don't remember many days where I haven't asked myself: Did I make the right moral decision? Mostly, I've seen things that make me believe I've made the right decision.

The fact is that the issues seemed very gray to me — I did not see why a strike needed to occur. I was able to separate my desire to come to work here from the issue of, was the company doing something egregiously wrong? I didn't feel that way.

As the strike has gone on, the word "scab" has gained less power over me. It's a way to dehumanize people.

By that time the embarrassed companies were beyond hungry. Meanwhile, in their long battle against each other and then their long joint struggle to get a JOA, the papers had fallen "woefully behind," as Gruley puts it, in modernizing operations, including gaining labor efficiencies. "Only in 1992 did Gannett and Knight-Ridder persuade the Teamsters to agree to a streamlining of the antiquated circulation operation," Gruley writes. "Only in 1992 did they get the pressmen to reduce 'manning' minimums that had the Detroit papers employing dozens more" workers than comparable papers. Joseph Ungaro, who took over the agency in 1990, told Gruley that the company was "at least ten or twenty years behind the times."

Management began to aggressively attend to what it had ignored.

So when contract talks rolled around again in 1995, a destructive dynamic was in place. The unions felt that — after backing the JOA, after giving up some jobs then and more during the tense negotiations of 1992 — they wanted their share of the profit their sacrifices helped create. Instead, management wanted further cost-cutting.

Management complains that its printing plants were still rife with featherbedding, that other workers were getting bogus overtime pay, that it had inadequate control over its delivery system. People had brought "sleeping bags to work because they had nothing to do," one executive claimed. Management says it was demanding job cuts only by attrition and was ready to give generous raises.

The unions say they were willing to address all of the papers' problems, but that it seemed as if management didn't want to bargain. The two sides, the unions say, never even got as far as talking money. Week after week, the unions say, they would bring new proposals, only to be handed back the same "take it or leave it" offer.

Then came the spark. Company negotiators say they wanted movement at the bargaining table, that they didn't want to get "slow danced" into the fourth quarter, when newspaper advertising flows most heavily. In late June '95 they announced that, after two weeks, they would no longer continue to extend the old contract, as companies usually do in collective bargaining. The unions were stunned. They said they would like to keep talking, and did so briefly, but then said they could no longer bargain without protection or signs of progress.

At 8 P.M. on July 13, nearly 2,500 employees walked, leaving about 900, mostly nonunion employees inside. For many of the strikers, it would be their last day on the job.

At the guild, the second-guessing began almost immediately. There were heated debates at union meetings. Some members pleaded for the guild to break away from the Teamsters and the other unions and return to work; others argued for strength through solidarity, pointing to examples of newspapers where unions had gone their separate ways and been crushed. The majority insisted that there was no choice but to stay with the strike. The critics said they had walked into a trap.

STRATEGIES

Many in the unions believe that the companies wanted a strike. The companies say they were prepared for one, but in the manner of well-drilled nuclear warriors hoping that they never have to push the big red button. They were indeed prepared. Once the strike began, booted guards from Vance International's Asset Protection Team were immediately visible at the papers' downtown offices, printing plants, and other properties; some 600 of them were in place within about a week. Managers, nonunion editors, and other nonunion personnel began writing stories and running presses. Borrowed workers, editorial and non-editorial, flew in from other Gannett and Knight-Ridder properties around the country. Some 200 drivers were hired from outside contractors. As a result, in more than nineteen months, the papers never missed a day of publication.

The union strategy was to push two boycotts, one aimed at readers and the other at advertisers. In both areas they could claim considerable success. They failed with the third prong of the strategy, however: slowing distribution. During the first summer of the strike hundreds of strikers and their supporters attempted to block the gates of printing plants in Detroit and in suburban Sterling Heights to prevent truckloads of Sunday papers from hitting the streets. In Sterling Heights, strikers regularly clashed with guards dressed in riot gear and with the Sterling Heights police department, whose overtime was being paid for by the newspapers.

On a Saturday in early September of that year the unions got some disheartening evidence of the odds against them, of just how deep into their pockets Gannett and Knight-Ridder would dig to win. As picketers squared off against police and security guards, a roar could be heard overhead. All eyes looked up at the bright lights in the sky. It was an airlift: helicopters loading and flying off into the night. They roared in and out from dusk to dawn. "If they'd pay us what it cost to deliver papers via helicopter," one striker said, "we'd have never gone out in the first place."

CRACKS IN THE LINE

From July 15 through September 18, 1995, the papers published a combined

WHY I WALKED



Kate DeSmet, 41, had worked at The Detroit News for seventeen years, covering religion for eleven of them and taking the higher education beat just before marching out on strike. She has been "adopted" by the guild unit at The Boston Globe, which sends money each month to help her meet her bills while she works full time on strike activities such as speaking and organizing.

My publisher, Bob Giles, wanted to impose all his conditions on us. In the guild, my base salary had stayed the same for just about six years. Management told the Teamsters in 1992 that if you give us these concessions now you can come back in 1995 and pick our pockets. The company had no intention of that, of course; they had every intention of breaking us. They did not want to deal with unions. It is Gannett. Their arrogance is profound.

When we first walked out, the sky had a purple cast to it and it was warm. It was electric. A massive picket line was in force. There was a newspaper bar not far from where we were. We went to get a hamburger and on the wall was a painting of a priest, Monsignor Clement Kern, a great labor priest, and he was looking down and smiling. That touched me.

It changed for me the night they nearly ran us over with those trucks. Four in the morning, picketing for hours, the gates flew open and eleven trucks roared out, directly at us. People barely got out of the way. I was standing on the lawn of the printing plant that had printed my newspaper for all these years. I was shaking. That's when I realized this was a lot more serious. It's radicalizing.

edition every weekday (the weekend edition had been combined at the start of the JOA). There was concern that the papers risked losing their identities if they didn't resume publishing separately. But to put out two daily papers again, management needed to replenish the staffs. So the *Free Press* sent an ultimatum to all striking guild mem-

bers: return to work or you will be permanently replaced. They were shocked. This was a paper that for decades had prided itself on a strong relationship with employees, one that, roughly a year earlier, had editorialized in favor of a law banning the use of permanent replacement workers during strikes.

But the ultimatum gave the guild a major problem. On deadline day some three dozen *Free Press* journalists, including high-profile columnists, crossed the picket line, joining about forty who had already done so. Eventually, roughly half of the 500 striking editorial employees at both papers would go back to work. The other five unions held their members in line, reporting just a handful of defections. In subsequent weeks, management began hiring people it called permanent replacements.

There were still periodic meetings at the bargaining table, but company demands got tougher. Managers said the strike had taught them how to run production with fewer people, so any new agreement would have to reflect that reality.

In the fight for Detroit's hearts and minds, the unions took some ground. To present their point of view, with some AFL-CIO seed money, they started a weekly paper of their own, *Detroit Sunday Journal*, which is still published on paper and online (<http://www.rust.net/~workers/strike.html>). City politicians and religious leaders generally supported them. Dennis W. Archer, Detroit's very popular mayor, has contended that the papers have failed to bargain in good faith. Cardinal Adam Maida, leader of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit, issued several statements calling the hiring of permanent replacement workers unacceptable.

But moral support does not pay the mortgages. Most strikers have had to supplement strike pay of roughly \$150 a week from their unions. A striking *Free Press* restaurant critic is now a maitre d' in the suburbs; another writer is a clerk at a Detroit pottery shop.

As the strike entered its twentieth month, and with no end in sight, and with the papers, save for the presence of beefy security guards, acting as though the strike were already over, the unions made their unconditional offer to return to work.

THE DAMAGE

By then, a long list of journalists had found work at other publications — *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Boston Globe*, the *Toledo Blade*, *Fortune*, and *Automotive News* — to name a few. Some are doing corporate work; others teach. Many are talented reporters any newspaper would have a hard time replacing.

Even without those reporters, the *News* and *Free Press* "have done some very good pieces; a series in the *Free Press* on nursing homes just won a big award," says Cindy Goodaker, executive editor of *Crain's Detroit Business*. "On the other hand, when you replace that many employees, a lot of institutional memory walks out the door." Mayor Archer certainly agrees: "We do not have the same newspaper reports who have sources, who seem to know what many of us are saying as soon as the words are out of our lips," he says. "There's no history."

Detroit Newspapers cites a tangential boon from the strike: increased employment of blacks and women. Before the

WHY I CROSSED



Marc Gunther, 46, worked in Washington covering media issues from 1991 to 1996 for the *Free Press* and *Knight-Ridder*. He joined the July 1995 strike but went back to work in October. Four months later, he left the paper for *Fortune* magazine, where he's a senior writer. Gunther is the author of three books, most recently *The House That Ruone Built*, published by Little, Brown and Company in 1994.

There are so many gradations of how people went back. Some went back within days, including high-profile columnists. A large group went back in August. Some went back in September, the point at which the company wrote a

strike, 16 percent of the agency's non-editorial employees were black, according to Tim Kelleher, senior vice president for labor relations. Now 39 percent are black. But those gains don't extend to

letter saying, "If you don't, we're going to replace you." I went back sometime toward the middle or end of October.

You have no idea how wrenching this was for the people in Detroit. People had drug problems and alcohol problems and marital problems from the strike. If you are asking me who I was rooting for, I was always rooting for the unions. There was featherbedding in Detroit, but I don't think the company tried hard to work it out. I think they absolutely provoked the strike.

I really, really didn't want to cross that picket line. I had the luxury of not working in Detroit. I never had to physically cross it. Had I gone back in the beginning, I would have been part of why the strike was lost and broken. I couldn't have done that and lived with myself. But when I finally went back in, I didn't feel like I was causing the strike to be lost; the strike was already lost. It wasn't fun.

the newsrooms. The *News* stayed about the same; the *Free Press* lost ground. The Detroit chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists passed a resolution in support of the strikers.

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ENDGAME

As strikers trickle back under management's terms, some on the inside wonder about newsroom chemistry. "One of two things will happen," Lekan Oguntinyinbo, thirty-two, a replacement worker previously with Cleveland's *Plain Dealer*, said to National Public Radio. "Either they will, after a long time, come to the conclusion that I'm a nice guy and will work cordially with me, or they will probably always despise me. And, you know, if they do that I won't blame them. They were fighting for a cause. I hurt their cause."

Others worry that the strike could hasten the day when the city becomes a one-newspaper town. Morton, the analyst, believes that when Gannett agreed to forfeit its morning slot, it was agreeing to the lingering death of the *News*. But he sees the end as still a long way off, a "death of 1,000 cuts." *News* editor and publisher Robert Giles says neither parent company has killing a newspaper in mind. "Our long-term strategy is to publish two newspapers. Quite obviously, one of the benefits of this long struggle is that the efficiencies we've been

able to put in place guarantee that we will be able to run a very profitable business here with two strong newspapers for the duration of the JOA."

As CJR went to press, both sides were waiting for hints and portents from the wild card in this dispute — the National Labor Relations Board. William Schaub, the NLRB's regional director in Detroit, has already charged the papers with failing to bargain in good faith with the unions. An administrative law judge is currently deliberating that charge. In April Schaub filed another complaint contending that the strikers should be rehired, that they have a greater right to their jobs than the replacement workers have to theirs. Should the law judge's eventual rulings on these charges be appealed (as both sides expect), it will be up to the full NLRB board in Washington to make a final decision. And that decision, too, could be appealed to the federal courts, which could take years.


Not wanting to wait long, the unions are pinning their short-term hopes on another possibility — that the NLRB will seek a federal injunction ordering the papers to take everyone back immediately. Such an order, known as a 10(J)

injunction, would likely force management to dump its replacement workers.

Should the unions eventually get all their people back inside and manage to get contracts, they could claim the bitter victory of having survived despite a management that was willing to spend millions to crush them. "The question would go to the publishers, 'What have you achieved?'" says Louis Mleczo, president of local 22 of The Newspaper Guild of Detroit.

But Gannett and Knight-Ridder, for now and perhaps forever, can point to much lower labor costs. In that sense, the strike, like the bloody battle for the JOA itself, can be seen as an investment. If unions elsewhere lose nerve, the dividends could extend to the chains' other newspapers in other cities, and even beyond Gannett and Knight-Ridder.

It's difficult to hear any cheering in Detroit, though, over all the moans and wails. Two of these companies' proudest newspapers are greatly diminished and a significant part of their city now detests them. The duration of the JOA agreement is one hundred years. It is hard to imagine how the remaining ninety-two can get much worse. ♦



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THE MESSAGE FROM MOTOR CITY

by Tim Jones

Every once in a while the folks in Detroit cast an envious eye across Lake Erie to Cleveland, a city that has been enjoying a business and commercial renaissance. If Cleveland can have a new baseball stadium, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and the image of a city that is turning its fortunes around, why not Detroit?

Add another item to the list that feeds Detroit's Cleveland envy: a decade of guaranteed of labor peace between *The Plain Dealer* and the newspaper's 900 unionized employees. As Detroit was in the fourteenth month of its bitter and financially debilitating newspaper strike, *The Plain Dealer* and its unions announced last September a stunning breakthrough in newspaper labor/management relations — eight ten-year contracts and one fourteen-year pact covering the paper's major bargaining units.

The contracts are "eloquent testimony to the mutually respectful and mature

relationships we have with the unions," *Plain Dealer* publisher Alex Machaskee said. "It's a first class contract," is the way Carmen Parise, secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 473, describes the deal.

True, the issues in Cleveland were not the same. But were the unions in Cleveland casting a thoughtful gaze on Detroit? Sure, says Parise, who negotiated on behalf of 500 production and circulation employees. With or without Detroit, however, he insists, a strike would never have made sense. "As long as the employer has the ability to replace the worker," Parise says, "it is pure suicide to go out."

So what's the lesson in Detroit for other big-city papers? It may be too early for final judgments, especially since some important allegations of unfair labor practices need to be resolved by the National Labor Relations Board and the federal courts.

But the legacy may be that labor and management can only on rare occasions afford a strike in an unforgiving media

environment that newspapers no longer dominate. The unions are surely losers in Detroit — even with an NLRB victory, they've lost some 600 jobs — yet it is difficult to declare Knight-Ridder and Gannett the winners. Detroit Newspapers, the entity that runs the two newspapers in that city, has lost at least \$120 million in revenue, dropped 30 percent of circulation, and suffered an imponderable blow to its greatest local asset: goodwill in the community.

"I'm not sure what the strike accomplished. I hope it doesn't hasten the demise of another newspaper," says Jim Naughton, former executive editor of *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and now president of the Poynter Institute. "Companies are probably more emboldened as a result of the Detroit strike to take a stand, but more sobered at the same time by the size of the risk involved."

Naughton says Detroit clearly influenced the 1995 labor negotiations in Philadelphia, because neither side wanted to take that kind of risk. Such caution, he

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predicts, will extend to other bargaining tables at other newspapers. "I would be surprised if union negotiators are not being much more careful about drawing the line in the sand. It's not that there isn't a line to be drawn, but where and when is a much more serious matter now."

Negotiations at the *Chicago Sun-Times*, tentatively set to begin in May, could test the lessons of Detroit. The tabloid is owned by Hollinger International Inc., a newspaper subsidiary controlled by the Canadian publisher Conrad Black, who has earned a reputation as a harsh critic of unions.

The *Sun-Times* is a financially healthier paper than when Black bought it in 1994, although it still lags far behind the high-profit performance of Black's other publications. The unions authorized a strike three years ago, but it was averted with the signing of a contract. Since then, Hollinger has acquired, among other suburban papers, the *Daily Southtown*. While no one is talking strike now, Hollinger could call upon the workforce from its suburban newspapers if one occurred.

Jerry Minkinen, executive director

of the Chicago Newspaper Guild Local 71, has his mind firmly on talking, not walking. "Nobody is cocky," he says, "Nobody wants to see a strike." Will Detroit have an impact on Chicago? "I don't know," Minkinen adds. "In the long haul, I can't see any rational analysis that would give management any hope or encouragement of entering into a dispute. Both newspapers in Detroit have lost credibility in addition to losing a helluva lot of money."

The Detroit strike was unique, for several reasons, not the least of which were management's inability to turn faster profits from the 1989 joint operating agreement and labor's frustration at not getting what it considered its fair share of profits after earlier sacrifices. The depth of the pockets of the Gannett and Knight-Ridder are also unique. Detroit was different, and so, says Linda Foley, president of The Newspaper Guild, is every other bargaining situation.

"We've had several major contract settlements since the Detroit strike started," Foley says. "The *Boston Globe*, The Associated Press." She points to the 1994

newspaper strike in San Francisco, where the unions won much of what they wanted. "But did we all of a sudden start getting great contracts across the country? No. Every situation takes on a life of its own."

Indeed, each major newspaper strike in this decade — in New York, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and Detroit — was unique in its own way, and different in outcomes. The unions could claim victory in San Francisco and New York. In Pittsburgh, which had two newspapers when the strike began, *The Pittsburgh Press* closed. The message from Detroit says this strike failed, but it does not mean all strikes will fail.

Detroit, in fact, may have merely confirmed what Parise and others in the industry have thought for years — that newspaper strikes, which peaked in number thirty years ago, before technology shifted the bargaining advantage to management, are extremely risky ventures for all concerned.

Tim Jones covers the media for the Chicago Tribune.

The Society of Professional Journalists announces the \$30,000

Eugene C. Pulliam Fellowship

editorial writing award for 1997

The history

The Society of Professional Journalists began the Pulliam Fellowship in 1977 through a grant from Mrs. Eugene C. Pulliam. The fellowship honors the memory of Eugene C. Pulliam, one of the original members of the Society, founded in 1909 as Sigma Delta Chi. Pulliam was also the publisher of *The Indianapolis Star*, *The Indianapolis News*, *The Arizona Republic* and *The Phoenix Gazette*.

The fellowship today

The fellowship, a grant of \$30,000, is awarded annually to an outstanding editorial writer to help broaden his or her journalistic horizons and knowledge of the world through travel or study. The award can be used to cover the costs of study in any field and/or the costs of travel in the United States or abroad.

The requirements

Qualified applicants will have at least three years full-time editorial writing experience, outstanding writing and analytical abilities and a specific plan for study and/or travel. Applicants must send a

one page personal biography, a summary of professional experience, five samples of your editorials, your plan for study and/or travel with a discussion of how this award will enhance your professional development and a letter of endorsement from your employer. All entries must be in English.

The presentation

The fellowship recipient will be notified by September 1 and will receive the award at the Pulliam Editorial Fellowship Banquet on November 15 in Washington, D.C.

The deadline

Materials should be postmarked by July 1, 1997, and be sent to:

Pulliam Editorial Fellowship
Society of Professional Journalists
16 South Jackson Street
Greencastle, Indiana 46135-1514



If you have questions please contact the Society at (765) 653-3333.
The Pulliam Editorial Fellowship is an SDX Foundation educational program for the Society of Professional Journalists.

MARJORIE SCARDINO

YANKS THEIR CHAIN

*In Britain, a Texas Tornado Shatters the Glass Ceiling
— and Makes a Big Bet on Print*

by Bonnie Angelo

The news struck London's fusty financial district — not to mention Fleet Street — like a thunderclap. The Pearson company, one of the world's biggest media and entertainment conglomerates, last October named its new chief executive, and the choice was a stunner:

An American!

A Texan!

And — surely there must be some mistake — a woman!

The new boss is Marjorie Morris Scardino, a rangy blonde from Texarkana, sometime rodeo barrel racer, promising copy editor with the Associated Press, prairie populist, lawyer and First Amendment scholar, reporter and publisher (with her husband) of a crusading, Pulitzer Prize-winning Georgia weekly. For the first time in the long history of British enterprise a woman heads one of the United Kingdom's top 100 companies. What makes this more remarkable is that Pearson has set the pace for British stodginess — the prototypical furred-broly, pinstripe-and-watchchain type of firm, dominated by the same titled family that founded it in 1856. The

Bonnie Angelo, a contributor for Time, was that magazine's London bureau chief from 1979 to 1985.

CORPORATE BRITAIN REMAINS LARGELY AN OLD BOYS' CLUB WITH RAISED EYEBROWS AND LOWERED EXPECTATIONS THAT A WOMAN CAN RESHAPE PEARSON

glass ceiling had been truly shattered.

With one leap Scardino, fifty, moved from Pearson's \$250 million-a-year Economist group (consisting of the esteemed newsweekly and its many offshoots, 50 percent owned by Pearson) to boss of the whole \$3.5-billion-a-year conglomerate. Her salary, options, and fringes will nudge \$1 million.

She has to move quickly to win over the skeptical brokers and analysts. Many of them had hoped for a hard-nosed outsider to take Pearson — a hodge-podge of disparate parts — by the scruff of the neck and make it perform better. Instead, they got this insider who has never before run a public company. Corporate Britain remains largely an old boys' club with raised eyebrows and lowered expectations that a woman can reshape Pearson.

Pearson is best known for the companies it keeps, from the worldly *Financial Times* to *Marca*, a racy Spanish sports newspaper, and *Roll Call*, Capitol Hill's ultimate inside-the-beltway semi-weekly; TV holdings from the Thames to the Ganges; a stable of book publishers including Penguin; and motley businesses from Lazard Brothers' shrewd financiers to Madame Tussaud's wax dummies. New media, old media? Yeah, we got that.

Now Scardino plans to focus Pearson even more intently on its strong journalistic core and sell off some \$1.5 billion of nonmedia properties. That's quite unlike U.S. conglomerates, notably Disney, that are dumping many of their press holdings on grounds that their profits aren't growing fast enough. Her first decision as c.e.o. was to pump up to \$240 million into the *Financial Times* over the next five years, largely to boost its circulation in North America (now 31,000) and Asia. When *FT* executives approached her with bold expansion plans — and *The Wall Street Journal* in their sights — she responded immediately, "Go for it." To make it happen, *FT* editor Richard Lambert is being dispatched to New York to ride herd for a year.

She is just following the strategy that she used as worldwide chief of

The Economist Group from 1992 through 1996. While other media companies were selling or shutting down print properties, Scardino and her aides were aggressively creating new ones from *The Economist* intelligence unit's massive database, notably some 300 tightly focused niche publications, from detailed reports on 195 countries to the annual *Rubber Trends*.

Scardino also went about acquiring newspapers and magazines — not only *Roll Call* but also *CFO*, a Boston-based monthly magazine for senior financial executives, and the *Journal of Commerce*, which rides on shipping and trade. Why did she buy the *Journal of Commerce* from Knight-Ridder? Easy. "I couldn't afford *The Wall Street Journal*."

She thinks it's terrific for *The Economist* to own an international daily newspaper based in New York. "I'd love to edit this paper," she said to Dan Holt, the *Fortune* veteran she hired as editor. He has substantially modernized its design. (Scardino no longer has any role with *The Economist*. Pearson is a strictly hands-off silent partner.)

In her southernish accent, Scardino sighs, "Desk editing! That's what God meant me to do." Her infatuation with print dates from 1970, when she left George Washington University Law School to work for the AP in Charleston, West Virginia, as a dictationist and quickly rose to desk editor. When a hotshot rookie reporter named Albert Scardino turned in his first big feature to her, she read it and asked dismissively, "Whoever told you that you could write?" Criticism soon morphed into commitment. Later they moved west and were wed in a ceremony in a San Francisco park, speaking vows that they wrote



**WHY DID SHE
BUY THE
JOURNAL OF COMMERCE
FROM KNIGHT-RIDDER?
EASY. "I COULDN'T
AFFORD THE WALL
STREET JOURNAL."**

together and which she did not edit.

The Scardinos returned to Albert's native Savannah in 1978 to start a newspaper "that would make a difference." Their *Georgia Gazette* was a feisty alternative weekly with a circulation that hit 2,600 on its best days and profits that reached considerably less than zero. In 1984, Albert's editorials, exposing wrongdoing by low men in high places, won a Pulitzer Prize, the first awarded to a weekly in twenty years. Says Marjorie: "We played a part in putting thirty-five pub-

lic officials in jail, from the clerk of court to the state labor commissioner." She was an avid reporter as well as the publisher, though she didn't dare leave her day job as a partner in a Savannah law firm because "We had to eat."

Their anti-establishment zeal cast them as skunks at the garden party and dried up the legal advertising that had kept the *Gazette* afloat. One year after the Pulitzer's rosy glow, they drowned in red ink.

The two disheartened journalists headed for New York in 1985, seeking solace and salaries, and their luck turned. With his Pulitzer luster, Albert joined *The New York Times* (followed by a turbulent stint as press secretary for Mayor David Dinkins). A head-

hunter cast Marjorie as the No. 2 to the incoming c.e.o. of *The Economist*'s operations in North America, but he opted not to take the job and recommended her in his place. The decidedly underqualified, failed weekly publisher convinced *Economist* executives back at the home office that "you learn a lot more from mistakes you make than when everything goes smoothly."

In her seven years as the New York-based head of the *Economist* operations in North America, the magazine's circulation there surged from 100,000 to more than 230,000, numbers that made an impression on worldwide headquarters back in London. Her key was to identify their target readers carefully and go after them energetically — precisely what she aims now for the *Financial Times*. She harnessed direct mail and placed sophisticated ads in airports and commuter rail stations, and gave out free copies at New York, Washington, and Boston shuttle terminals — places haunted by traveling business execu-

tives. And she used the profits to buy all those print properties.

Small wonder that when *The Economist* in London needed a worldwide c.e.o. in 1992, Scardino got the job. In her four-year tenure, earnings rose by 130 percent and circulation climbed from 503,000 to 618,000. She gives the credit to her deputies: "I just send flowers and get out of the way."

Scardino settled easily into her fifth-floor office at Pearson headquarters in London's priciest enclave, a few steps from designer-laden Bond Street in one

direction and the bespoke elegance of Savile Row in the other. Her uncluttered office, an oasis of pearl-gray modernism, is hung with minimalist works from her own collection and offers a view of the solidly Victorian Museum of Mankind across the narrow street. Though they could easily socialize with power brokers, the Scardinos live quietly with their two sons in tony Knightsbridge; their daughter is back in New York at Columbia University. Albert writes op-ed and other pieces, lectures occasionally, and is an accomplished house-husband.

With her jaunty informality, Scardino connects easily with people. "She sort of has that Texas squint when she looks you over," says Don Becker, c.e.o. of *The Journal of Commerce*. "She's sizing you up. She lets you know that things don't have to be that formal — she's down home." Approachable and gregarious, this chief executive likes to roam the corridors and talk with the troops on an egalitarian footing that is unusual in still class-conscious Britain. She likes to hear opinions around the shop, but when matters get argumentative, she'll declare in exaggerated Texas style, "This ain't no democracy."

In her first week at Pearson, Scardino sent a letter to each of the 17,000 employees around the world. "I do my best in an atmosphere of energy, some urgency, and a good amount of humor," she wrote. "I do not want to be associated with an organization that's not decent and fair."

If that's not the way *your* c.e.o. usually speaks, try this one from Scardino, in a pronouncement when she got the top job: "Clearly, my responsibility is to ensure we make investors a return on their investments. I also believe corporations have responsibilities to their employees, to make sure they have stimulating jobs. Corporations also have the responsibility to spend time on the community and on charity."

This has the ring of the grass-roots populism she grew up with. She remembers when her grandfather determined that she was old enough, at age eight, for him to tell her the political facts of life: "We are Democrats because we have the responsibility to take care of those less fortunate than we are, and the Republicans are just out for themselves."

The question intriguing many British businesspeople and newpeople is whether Scardino, with her passion for print, will be able both to expand in journalism and simultaneously to provide a good and growing return for investors. Meanwhile, journalists everywhere can watch with interest to see what happens next with this Texas transplant who looks well beyond the bottom line. ♦



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HONG KONG

The Future of Press Freedom



by Elliott Cohen

Councilor Emily Lau, one of twenty-seven elected lawmakers who'll be turned out on July 1 in favor of Beijing-appointed legislators.

China begins then to call the tune in this territory of 6.3 million people, 98 percent of them ethnic Chinese. Hong Kong is not only the business and finance hub of Asia outside Japan, but also the media hub. Besides serving as a base for dozens of international companies and their regional editions or services — *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Business Week*, UPI, *The Asian Wall Street Journal*, CNN, and many more — Hong Kong also has a lively local press scene and a long tradition of raucous press freedom, even in the harsher years of British control.

Today, nearly twenty dailies, including two in English, vie for readers. The top two Chinese-language papers, *Oriental Daily News* and *Apple Daily*, sell more than 350,000 copies each, boast seven-figure readerships, and feature detailed reviews of local brothels. Three Beijing-funded newspapers also compete in the marketplace, and China's official *People's Daily* is set to begin distribution by the hand-over. At the other end of the political spectrum, *Mad Dog Daily*, introduced last year, barks out horse-racing tips and anti-Beijing political commentary. Dozens of other small, community-news "mosquito" dailies add to the newsstand buzz.

The flood of news, besides providing thousands of jobs for Hong Kong people and expatriates, helps drive this bastion of capitalism. Even Tsang Tak-sing, chief editor of the Beijing-funded daily *Ta Kung Pao*, concedes, "We need the free flow of information for Hong Kong to consolidate its position as a regional

Scooping up papers that reported Deng's death: the real danger is self-censorship

In the small hours of February 20, Hong Kong's second-biggest news story of 1997 broke. China's ninety-two-year-old patriarch, Deng Xiaoping, was dead. Acting on a midnight tip that a Beijing-funded local newspaper was preparing a black border for its front page, the *South China Morning Post* held its presses until Deng's death was confirmed. Then the *Post*, Hong Kong's leading English-language newspaper, ran a poster-size picture of Deng on a special wraparound front page with five pages of related news inside. Most of Hong Kong's other major dailies blackened their normally colorful mastheads or added funereal

borders on page one. The *Post* also put out an eight-page lunchtime special with an in-depth look at the architect of China's economic reforms and of Hong Kong's biggest story of 1997, the territory's imminent return to Chinese rule. In the voluminous coverage of Deng's life and times readers would need a fine net to catch mention of his leading role in the June 4, 1989, killings of protesters at Tiananmen Square.

"I wasn't telling anyone that because Hong Kong is returning to China on July 1, we must write hagiography," asserts the *Post*'s editor, Jonathan Fenby. No one had to say a word. Since the Sino-British Joint Declaration of 1984 sealed the colony's return to China, the greatest enemy of press freedom in Hong Kong has been self-censorship. "It's a sign of a community that's terrified," says Legislative

Elliott Cohen is an editor for Bloomberg Business News in Hong Kong who is at work on a book on freedom of the press there with Andy Ho, a political columnist.

GAMMA LIAISON/TONY MCNULTY

and international center of financial and economic activities, so as to be useful to the modernization of China."

But Tsang's Beijing backers have made clear that, despite explicit assurances in international treaties, they plan to restrict the press, and Freedom Forum's Asia director, John Schidlovsky, sees a sad irony in China's efforts. "If Hong Kong's press freedom were to disappear," he says, "it would happen at a time when Southeast Asia's press is more feisty than it was ten years ago. It would be a defeat that would send a negative message to people who are trying to win press freedom in their countries."

The overriding consensus among the foreign press in Hong Kong, though, is that no profound changes in their freedom to report are likely after July 1. As Sandra Burton, bureau chief for *Time*, told the Commonwealth Journalists Association Conference in January: "We'll be treated better than our local colleagues. It's easier to pressure local journalists."

Already, reporters from the iconoclastic millionaire publisher Jimmy Lai's *Apple Daily* (see "An *Apple* a Day," *CJR*, March/April 1996) are barred from entering China, though officials sometimes turn a blind eye to their presence. *Apple* is the second-biggest newspaper in Hong Kong after *Oriental Daily News*, but the two-year-old paper, which has lambasted China's leadership over many issues, gets no advertising from China-controlled companies. Beijing also retaliated against Lai's Giordano clothing stores — he has since sold his stock in the chain — and bankers eager for business in China have refused to underwrite a public listing for his profitable media group, Next Media Holdings.

Article 27 of the Basic Law, the blueprint for reunified Hong Kong's relationship with China, guarantees Hong Kong residents "freedom of speech, of the press and of publication." But Article 23 instructs the Beijing-appointed Provisional Legislature of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) government to pass its own laws prohibiting "treason, secession, sedition, subversion against the Central People's Government, or theft of state secrets." Journalists say such laws open the door to press restrictions. So do disused colonial statutes still on the books, which

give the local government broad power to curb free expression.

Optimists argue that Deng's doctrine of "one country-two systems" guarantees Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy, with only its defense and foreign relations reserved to China's central government. Legislative Councilor Bruce Liu, who also sits in the Beijing-appointed Provisional Legislature, pledges to press the SAR government to maintain its independence. "Maybe we have 80 percent independence now," Liu says. "Maybe we'll only have 60 percent after the handover."

SUPPORTING INDEPENDENCE FOR TAIWAN, TIBET, CHINA'S ETHNIC MINORITIES, OR HONG KONG WILL BE OFF LIMITS

Paul Cheung Kin-bor, chief editor of *Ming Pao*, a 450,000-readership daily noted for political and intellectual commentary, says: "We have very different concepts. When we talk about freedom of the press, we must convince Chinese officials that what we're doing is in the best interests of the Hong Kong people and that they should keep their hands off." Lots of luck.

Last June, China's Director of Hong Kong and Macao Affairs, Lu Ping, warned: "It's all right if reporters objectively report. But if they advocate, it is action. That has nothing to do with freedom of the press."

Lu and other Chinese leaders say supporting independence for Taiwan, Tibet, China's ethnic minorities, or Hong Kong will be off limits. "The question is," Fenby says, "can people in China understand that when a Hong Kong newspaper puts a picture of Lee Tung-hui" — Taiwan's president — "on page one, they're not endorsing his policies?" (ATV, one of the territory's two broadcast television stations, whose signals reach 24 million people in southern

China, says it has no plans to stop its broadcasts of Taiwan's evening news, shown nightly after the mainland evening news.)

In October, China's foreign minister and deputy premier, Qian Qichen, chairman of the preparatory committee overseeing the handover, told *The Asian Wall Street Journal* that freedom of the press in Hong Kong won't extend to reporting "rumors or lies" or personal attacks on China's leaders. This February, Tung Chee-hwa, appointed by Beijing as chief executive-designate of the SAR government, told CNN that "slandorous, derogative remarks and attacks" against China's leaders might also be illegal. Tung supports Beijing's proposal to repeal a provision linking the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to Hong Kong's Bill of Rights on the ground that it contravenes the Basic Law.

Vague statements and ambiguous rumblings feeding a climate of fear may prove far more effective in curbing the press than specific directives. Surveying local journalists last year, Joseph Man Chan, journalism department chairman at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, found 25 percent admitted practicing self-censorship on issues they believed sensitive to China, and some 50 percent said they believed colleagues did so. "Right now, self-censorship is still being debated, and it's still seen as a despicable act," Chan says. "But there's a danger it may be considered a routine part of journalism as China's influence increases."

In recent months, there has been declining coverage of Martin Lee, leader of the Democratic party, Hong Kong's most popular party, as well as of other politicians out of favor with Beijing. Meanwhile, Freedom Forum's Schidlovsky says, coverage of Chief Executive-designate Tung has been "deferential, if not reverential," adding, "Coverage of his selection process almost was as if it was a western-style democratic campaign and election, rather than a process completely controlled by Beijing."

In his speech acknowledging the need for a "free flow of information," Tsang Tak-sing of *Ta Kung Pao* wondered where defenders of free expression had been during Hong Kong's years of undemocratic colonial rule from London. Addressing the American

Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong in February, Tsang asked, "Why in the past 150 years had there never been any pronouncement from Washington to the effect that unless there were better treatment of the people in Hong Kong, the 'special relationship' between the U.S. and the U.K. would be severed? After 150 years of foreign domination over Hong Kong, I look forward to the full realization of the slogan 'Hong Kong to be administered by the people of Hong Kong.'"

International media companies are betting that their freedoms will be relatively unchanged after the handover. Amid the gathering signs of press restrictions under Chinese rule, *Time*, CNN, NBC Asia, Thailand's Manager Media Group (publishers of *Asia, Inc.* as well as the Bangkok-based *Asia Times* daily), and Bloomberg Business News have either established or signifi-

cantly expanded editorial management functions in Hong Kong since 1995. Only Reuters has decamped, to Singapore. Its Asia editor, Tony Winning, says the decision was based on available space in a building Reuters owns there, enabling the company to put its regional marketing, administration, and editorial functions under one roof. Says he: "Freedom of the press had nothing to do with it."

"Hong Kong really is the crossroads of Asia in a way no other place is," says CNN's bureau chief, Mike Chinoy. "If we thought it would go to hell in a handbasket, we wouldn't be here."

But among local journalists, cartoonist Larry Feign thinks he has seen the future, and finds it bleak. His *South China Morning Post* strip, "The World of Lily Wong," was dropped in May 1995 because, he says, Robert Kuok, the

businessman who owns the paper, "is a friend of Li Peng" — China's premier — "and has multimillion-dollar investments in China." Feign's twelve-year-old-strip was scrubbed immediately after it suggested that a citizen agreeing with the suggestion that "Li Peng is a fascist murderous dog" became an instant organ donor. To the *Post's* contention that his firing was just part of a 10 percent staff cutback, Feign declares: "It's bullshit that the editor wanted to cut costs by cutting out his most popular feature."

"I've been totally blacklisted," Feign claims, even though, he says, editors tell him, "You're the best cartoonist in Hong Kong. We love your stuff." Stingingly he adds, "There is no clamp-down on free speech in Hong Kong, and there won't be any after July 1. There won't have to be. We're doing it all ourselves." ♦

Reading the Tea Leaves: What to Look For

Here are some ways to measure how Hong Kong's press freedom is faring after July 1.

- **Radio Television Hong Kong:** Chinese officials were stunned last year when RTHK, Hong Kong's editorially independent, government-owned public broadcaster, turned down their request for air time. "In China, on a state-owned channel, the government has a right to put on programs," explains Tai Keen Man, head of RTHK Radio One. "But in Hong Kong, we've established a tradition that is different. I don't expect that to change, but everyone expects more pressure."

RTHK's independence rests on an administrative order, which can be rescinded by the Principal Secretary overseeing the Broadcasting Department. It will take a lot of education to convince Chinese officials that public money is wisely spent on an independent broadcaster. Most local journalists and analysts are convinced it's just a matter of time before RTHK, whose AM signals reach southern China, becomes a government mouthpiece. One early signal: whether Radio 6, part of RTHK, continues carrying the BBC World Service.

- **Coverage of ousted legislators:** The Democratic party's leader, Martin Lee, and the Frontier party's leader, Emily Lau, are among Hong Kong's most popular politicians. They are also among twenty-seven elected lawmakers to be dumped from the Legislative Council on July 1 and replaced by Beijing appointees. Hong Kong editors almost uniformly say they'll continue to cover ousted lawmakers "as long as they make news."

But along with the new election laws expected to be passed by the Provisional Legislature, media invisibility poses a

threat to their 1998 prospects for election to a new Legislative Council. Chinese officials would like to see both politicians and their allies out of the public eye, but as one business reporter who asked not to be identified says: "Martin Lee and Emily Lau will lose their place in the news not because of Chinese pressure, but because they've lost their influence over the political process. Hong Kong people are quite practical. If you don't have influence, then people don't care."

- **Foreign media registration:** In Hong Kong, journalists and news organizations now need comply only with regulations applicable to any other business. In China, foreign journalists must register with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and they encounter wide-ranging restrictions. Hong Kong's foreign relations are specifically reserved for China's central government under the Basic Law. A broad interpretation of the clause could lead to Beijing's governing foreign media in Hong Kong. But *Time's* Asia Edition editor, Donald Morrison, says, "I've seen no indication of that from Chinese officials. The only time it ever comes up is when the foreign media raise it."

- **June 4 commemorations:** Hong Kong people have held an annual candlelight vigil to mark China's 1989 killing of anti-government protesters at Tiananmen Square. China's deputy premier, Qian Qichen, said such demonstrations would be illegal after the handover, but a spokesman claimed his remarks were misinterpreted. The size of this year's demonstration, three and a half weeks before the handover, will indicate Hong Kong people's courage; coverage of it and editorial comment will be a leading indicator of the media's.

E. C.

JASON WHITLOCK SCORES IN K.C.

*This provocative sports columnist wins fans by
being an equal opportunity basher*

by John Garrity

The ink was hardly dry on his contract with the Kansas City Chiefs when new quarterback Elvis Grbac got the warning letter. "Hey, man. Remember me?" it opened ominously. "Black dude, about 6 feet 4, looks like a young Denzel Washington only more muscular?"

Grbac remembered. This was the guy

Garrity is a Sports Illustrated senior writer based in Kansas City.

who hounded him in Ann Arbor, Michigan in the fall of '92, the guy who tried to get him benched when he was quarterback of the Rose Bowl champion University of Michigan football team. There was no point in taking the letter to the police, though. They were probably already chuckling over it downtown — along with an unspecified portion of *The Kansas City Star's* 682,000 daily readers. The "open letter" to Grbac appeared in the left-hand column on D-1 of the *Star* under the byline and mug shot of

twenty-nine-year-old Jason Whitlock, the hip-hop scourge of Kansas City sports commentary.

Since joining the *Star* in September 1994, Whitlock has alternately enthralled and appalled a readership whose previous definition of "plain speaking" was Harry Truman muttering "S.O.B." under his breath. Within weeks of his hire, Whitlock, the most provocative and controversial sports columnist in mid-America, thumbed his rhetorical nose at legendary quar-



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terback Joe Montana, launched a mock campaign to join the once racially exclusive Kansas City Country Club, and livened a college football rivalry by telling Kansas State fans to show up for a game in their Sunday best — “jeans with fewer than two stains and a nice flannel shirt.” To less comic effect, and with no documentation, he subsequently described David Glass, c.e.o. of Kansas City Royals and Wal-Mart, as a “congenital liar” — a taunt provoked by Whitlock’s belief that Glass was condescending to him in an interview.

The strident and sometimes personal tone of Whitlock’s prose dismays some readers, especially those who grew up with the measured, fair-minded commentary of former *Star* editor Joe McGuff, who was the paper’s sports editor long enough to write his way into the writers’ wing of the Baseball Hall of Fame. Professional golfer Tom Watson, a native Kansas Citian, reads Whitlock with clenched teeth. ABC-TV sports analyst Roger Twibell says Whitlock “sometimes crosses the line.” Whitlock haters write the paper, demanding that he be muzzled, and Whitlock victims call the *Star*’s editor, Arthur S. Brisbane, to complain.

Brisbane shifts uncomfortably in his chair: “I don’t want to put myself in the role of censorious Church Lady, telling my writers to tone it down,” he says. “Jason is popular with readers who think it’s time this market got a different kind of voice. He’s passionate, intrusive, extremely overbearing — but, at the same time, compelling.”

It’s the intrusiveness that has Whitlock detractors yelling foul. In 1995, when major league baseball tried to shake off the effects of a long players’ strike, Whitlock asked his readers to punish the S.O.B.s — “Stupid Offensive Baseballers” — by boycotting opening day at Kauffman Stadium. The boycott plan horrified civic leaders, who gave Brisbane an earful of history he already knew. Kansas City, one of the

smallest big-league markets, has since 1968 said good-bye to the major league A’s, the NHL Scouts, the NBA Kings, two soccer franchises, the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics headquarters and basketball tournament, and the Big Twelve Conference headquarters. Without fan support, the unprofitable Royals — currently led by Glass — would probably leave Kansas City, and that would

be a body blow for the whole community. Whitlock, insisting he was not buckling to pressure, pronounced the Royals sufficiently contrite and called off the boycott.

Lately, the columnist tried to lend his management skills to the more prosperous Chiefs, who have consistently sold out the 79,000-seat Arrowhead Stadium in the nine years that Carl Peterson has been president and general manager. In a series of columns starting in September 1996, Whitlock urged the Chiefs to sign free-agent quarterback Jeff George, a talented but temperamental player who was let go by the Atlanta Falcons after he threw a sideline tantrum on national television. When the Chiefs passed on George, Whitlock — who has been his close friend since they played on the same high school football team in Indianapolis — raked Peterson with a week-long fusillade of bitter columns.

“Jason was personally hurt and angry,” says Peterson, “and I think he lost his objectivity. I didn’t particularly like being called a liar and being told I have my head up my ass.” Peterson said as much to Brisbane over lunch at the Stadium Club, and Brisbane promised that the *Star*’s football coverage would show balance over all. “It hasn’t soured our relationship with the *Star*,” says Peterson, who spends about a half-million advertising dollars a year with the city’s print gorilla. Chuckling, he adds, “Their sales people start every conversation with, ‘We apologize for Jason Whitlock — but can we still do some business with you?’”

Indisputably, Whitlock is an equal opportunity basher. As he wrote in a

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column on March 2 about how today's black athletes rate in comparison with Jackie Robinson: "The modern-day black professional athlete couldn't spell struggle if you spotted him the S-T-R-U-G-G-L and told him the last letter was a vowel. (That might be true for white professional athletes, too, but I'm not dealing with them today.) Money and privilege have so disconnected the overwhelming majority of black professional athletes from the real issues impacting black people that a weekend without pizza is seen as an unforgettable hardship."

There's one thing Whitlock's fans and detractors can agree on: he's big. Huge. In shorts and a tee shirt, he fills the doorway of his townhouse in suburban Overland Park, Kansas. He could pass for an NFL offensive tackle. Unmarried, he lives alone in the style of a rookie pro — with big furniture, bare walls, and a giant boom box in front of a cold fireplace.

His father owns an inner-city bar in Indianapolis, and his mother was a factory worker at Western Electric.

Whitlock credits his dad's love of sports pages for his own fascination with newspapering. "I grew up reading the Indianapolis columnists, and they were horrible," he recalls. "I hated those guys and thought I could do better."

He didn't try until he was a fifth-year senior on a football scholarship at Ball State University. Grappling with the fact that he wasn't an NFL prospect — "I was what they call a 'locker-room lawyer,' and my first line coach hated my guts" — he quit football, dropped his accounting major, and signed up to write for the student newspaper.

Whitlock's first job out of college was as a part-time sports writer at the Bloomington, Indiana, *Herald-Times*. Eleven months later, he caught on full-time with the Rock Hill bureau of *The Charlotte Observer*, covering high school, rec league, and peewee sports. He crashed the main section by reporting on rap and R&B music, and those clips caught the eye of the *Ann Arbor News*, which hired him to cover University of Michigan basketball and football. Ann Arbor is where Whitlock joined his natural outspokenness to the rhetorical techniques of his favorite writer, *Chicago Tribune* columnist Mike Royko — "trying to mimic as much as I could while still being myself."

Whitlock's first column for the *Star* appeared on October 2, 1994. He wrote, "It's always best to start a relationship by discussing pertinent information . . . so I must tell you that I have been tested for rudeness, negativity, cheapshottivity, cynicism, and the ability to jump off slow-moving bandwagons. And according to my doctor, the results are positive."

Whitlock is also like many of the athletes he covers — young, black, newly affluent, and painfully conscious of class distinctions. When he drops the tough-guy pose, it's usually to provide insight into black family life or to open a window on the urban street scene, where ebonics is not a controversy but a currency. In a column the morning of this year's NCAA basketball final, he moved readers with the story of Mike Bibby, the University of Arizona standout whose basketball-star father ignored him as a child. "Nights like tonight are made for father and



PRIVATIZATION CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Last July, many of the nation's leading experts on the privatization of government assets assembled for a one-day conference in Washington, D.C., sponsored by Americans for Responsible Privatization, the American Enterprise Institute and the National Tax Limitation Committee.

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son," Whitlock wrote. "That is no knock on motherhood. A mother's love for a son is totally unconditional. In America, where so many fathers dream of rearing sons as athletically gifted as Mike Bibby, nights like tonight — win or lose, goat or hero — leave indelible marks on a father-son relationship in much the same fashion as a wedding does a mother-daughter relationship."

The flip side of Whitlock's authenticity is his tendency to overreact if he thinks he's been "dissed." When KMBZ radio's Don Fortune blithely dismissed the Royals boycott as a stunt, he says Whitlock phoned the show, called Fortune names, hung up — and called back twenty minutes later with more insults. When Peterson went on Fortune's show in February to defend his handling of the Jeff George matter, Whitlock's column blasted the Chiefs' boss for "playing kissy-face with a no-backboned jacks player whose football expertise comes from his high school experience as a powder-puff cheerleader." Another radio voice, KCFX's Bob Gretz, sided with the Chiefs and found himself labeled a "media puppet" in the *Star*, his former employer. "Most of you already know that Gretz is a joke," wrote Whitlock, "and that it would take a sledgehammer, two crowbars, a flame thrower, mace, and a stick of dynamite to remove his lips from Peterson's backside."

These and other personal jabs have cost Whitlock some respect among his *Star* colleagues — one sportswriter denounced him at a staff meeting — but boosted his standing with what editor Brisbane calls "our young, alienated, anti-establishment readers." "It's not about breaking news any more," worries Bob Moore, the Chiefs' public relations director. "It's about breaking chops."

Whitlock sees it differently. "Black people call it 'playing the dozens,'" he says of his name-calling. His biggest regret? A column in which he imagined O.J. Simpson calling Chiefs running back Marcus Allen (a rumored lover of Nicole Simpson) from jail. "It was funny, but it wasn't appropriate for the paper," says Whitlock. "It was like telling a dirty joke in church."

What amazes *Star* watchers is that

such broad material has gotten past Art Brisbane, a former *Star* columnist himself and a respected reporter at *The Washington Post*. Says a former newsman: "He seems to let Jason run wild."

Brisbane insists that Whitlock, who is in year one of a three-year contract, is subject to the same ethical standards and professional expectations as other staffers. There is, he adds, only one Jason Whitlock at the *Star*, which is unfailingly civil in its news and editorial sections.

Whitlock says he'll keep writing for the homeboys in the 'hood, the rebe's,

and the seventy-year-old widows "who seem to love me for reasons I can't explain." The real test for the *Star*'s management will come when Whitlock decides to press his ambition to leave sports and write a Royko-style, general-interest column.

Meanwhile, he says, "Some people are trying to talk me out of applying for membership at the Kansas City Country Club. They say the KC Country Club caters to an uptight crowd. I say I'll have that crowd dancing to Snoop Dogg by the Christmas party." ♦



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IT'S A DANGEROUS JOB

26 journalists were murdered in 1996

The number is down sharply, but it remains a grim one: 26 journalists killed in the line of duty in 1996, in contrast to 57 the year before. So reports the Committee to Protect Journalists in its annual survey, "Attacks on the Press in 1996." It also noted that 185 journalists were in prison in 24 countries at year's end.

Half of the murders took place in just two countries, Algeria, with 7, and Russia, with 6. CPJ's investigation concluded that Islamic mili-

itants were "presumed responsible" for all the killings in Algeria; the Armed Islamic Group has claimed responsibility for nearly half of the 59 such killings there since violent civil strife began in 1992. Elsewhere, the killers may be government agents, anti-government forces, or professional criminals. The common denominator is that the victims die because of their devotion to finding and telling the truth.

Here, according to CPJ, are the victims:

ALGERIA: 7

Name **Date Killed**
Mohamed Mekati **January 10**
Correspondent for a government-owned newspaper; shot outside his home in Ain Naadja, southwest of Algiers.

Abdallah Bouhacheck **February 10**
Editor of the weekly publication of the country's largest union; shot near Blida, south of Algiers.

Allaoua Ait M'barak **February 11**
Mohamed Dorbane
Djamel Derraz

All journalists with an independent daily; killed, with at least fifteen others, when a car bomb exploded outside the Algiers building housing their newspaper and three others.

Djilali Arabidou **March 12**
Dean of Algerian photojournalists; worked for a pro-government weekly; shot in a suburb of Algiers.

Mohamed Guessab **August 12**
Host of a religious program on the state-run radio; shot while driving in an Algiers suburb; one brother riding with him was also killed and another was seriously wounded.

ANGOLA: 1

Antonio Casemero **October 30**
Correspondent for the state-owned television station; shot at his home in Cabinda; colleagues say he had been harassed and threatened by a regional official.

BANGLADESH: 1

Mohammad Quamruzzaman **February 19**
Reporter for a weekly newspaper; shot by police while covering their crackdown on an election protest in northern town of Nilphamari.

CAMBODIA: 1

Thun Bun Ly **May 18**
Writer, former editor of an opposition newspaper ordered closed by the government; was appealing convictions for defamation and disinformation for work critical of the government when he was shot in central Phnom Penh.

COLOMBIA: 1

Norvey Diaz **October 18**
Director and editor of a radio program; found murdered in Girardot after receiving death threats over reporting on alleged police involvement in murders of street people and on investments in resorts by drug traffickers. (In March of this year, the chief editorial writer for Cali's main newspaper, *El Pais*, was gunned down after writing a series of harsh criticisms of drug corruption during the tenure of President Ernesto Samper, The Associated Press reported.)

CYPRUS: 1

Kutlu Adali **July 6**
Political columnist with a leftist newspaper in Turkish-occupied northern Cyprus; shot in Lefkosa after writing critically about government immigration policies and an antiquities scandal said to involve a Turkish general; a group calling itself Turkish Revenge Brigade claimed responsibility for the killing.

INDIA: 2

Ghulam Rasool Sheikh **April 10**
Editor of an Urdu-language daily and an English-language weekly; found dead in Kashmir's Jhelum River; said by family members to have been kidnapped in March by Indian-government-backed militia after writing about killings and arson in area of his hometown, Pampur.

Parag Kumar Das **May 17**
Editor of the largest daily in Assam state and a leading journalistic voice for self-rule; shot in the state capital, Guwahati; he is believed to have been slain by a separatist splinter group.

INDONESIA: 1

Fuad Muhammad Syafruddin **August 16**
Correspondent for a Jogjakarta daily; beaten in his home after reporting on local land disputes.

IRELAND: 1

Veronica Guerin **June 26**
Crime reporter for *The Sunday Independent*; shot in her car after repeated physical attacks and death threats over her reporting on the Irish underworld;



Thun Bun Ly

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Nadezhda Chaikova

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Veronica Guerin

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Felix Solovyov

ITAR-TASS/SONOTO

won CPJ's 1995 International Press Freedom Award; a Dublin drug trafficker has been charged in her murder.

PHILLIPINES: 1

Ferdinand Reyes **February 13**
Editor of the weekly newspaper *Press Freedom*; shot in his office in Dipolog; had received death threats for writing about corruption among officials.

RUSSIA: 6

Felix Solovoyov **February 26**
Free-lance photojournalist, contributor to German newspaper *Bild am Sonntag*; shot by unidentified gunmen in central Moscow; had published a portfolio on Moscow mafia groups.

Viktor Pimenov **March 11**
Cameraman for a Chechen TV station supported by Moscow-backed forces; had been filming devastation caused by a Russian attack on Grozny, the Chechen capital; shot in the back by a sniper.

Nadezhda Chaikova **March 30**
Correspondent for a Russian weekly; known for exposés of Russian military atrocities in Chechnya; shot, execution-style; body found near village of Gekhi.

Nina Yefimova **May 9**
Reporter for a Russian-language newspaper in Grozny; had written about crime in Chechnya; abducted with her mother; both found dead of bullet wounds.

Viktor Mikhailov **May 12**
Crime reporter for a daily in southeastern Siberia; working on series on crime and law enforcement; beaten to death in city center of Chita.

Ramzan Khadzhiev **August 11**
An ethnic Chechnyan, he was chief of the Northern Caucasus bureau of Russian Public Television; shot in a car in Grozny; a passenger said Russian armored vehicles had fired on the car; his employers blamed Chechen rebels angered by his support of the Moscow-installed government.

TAJIKISTAN: 1

Viktor Nikulin **March 28**
Correspondent for Russian Public Television in Dushanbe; shot at the door to his office; the government called the killing a "terrorist act" by opposition forces, but both government loyalists and opposition groups have been suspected in violent campaigns against press freedom that have left twenty-nine journalists dead since 1992.

TURKEY: 1

Metin Goktepe **January 8**
Columnist for a left-leaning daily; found beaten to death in Istanbul; eleven policemen have been charged in his death and thirty-seven others have been charged with "dereliction of duty."

UKRAINE: 1

Igor Hrushetsky **May 10**
Free-lance journalist known for his reports on political corruption; found dead of a blow to the head near his home in Cherkassy.

Algeria and Russia: Shameful Records

In one of the most violent of the many terrorist attacks that struck Algeria last year, at least eighteen people were killed on February 11 when a car bomb exploded in the Belcourt quarter of Algiers, outside a heavily guarded building that houses several newspapers. Of those killed, three — Allaoua Ait M'barak, Mohamed Dorbane, and Djamel Derraz — were journalists with the *Le Soir d'Algérie*, an independent daily newspaper. The bomb seriously damaged the Maison de la Presse, home of that paper and of *L'Opinion*, *El Watan*, and *Al Khabar*.

The three journalists were among seven slain in Algeria in 1996. The year before, the number of victims was twenty-four. Algerian journalists are trapped in a war between the Algerian government and Islamic fundamentalist factions trying to overthrow it. Both sides want to use the press to expose the atrocities of their opponents.



The violence began in 1992 when the army halted parliamentary elections the Islamic Salvation Front appeared to be winning. In response, Islamic extremists vowed a campaign of violence against the state. Since then, the government has regularly censored the media and forbidden them to reveal information deemed harmful to state security, especially information about terrorist attacks. Those who disobey face heavy fines, court injunctions, and prison sentences.

The Committee to Protect Journalists says Islamic militants have claimed responsibility or are assumed responsible for all the known killings of journalists. But CPJ also says the government is responsible for assaults on some journalists. And the whereabouts of at least one reporter arrested by security forces in 1995 remain unknown, CPJ reports.

Because their activities go unreported, Islamic militants apparently believe the media are sympathetic to the state and have declared that "those who fight us with the pen shall be fought with the sword." The attacks on journalists thus become a method to let the public know the terrorists are operating, and reporters are forever trapped between the inability to publish freely and the threat of reprisal from both the government and terrorists.

In Russia, Number two in killings, most of the six murders in 1996 took place in war-torn Chechnya. Also, since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, crime and corruption have rocketed, and Russian journalists have increasingly focused their coverage on organized crime. But some journalists are becoming targets for murder because of their reporting on government corruption. Journalists like Nina Yefimova, who reported about crime in Chechnya for the Russian-language newspaper *Vozrozhdeniye* and was found dead on May 9, 1996, are targeted for contract killings, and few of their deaths are being investigated.

Steven Hu

Hu is an intern at CJR.

Historically, warnings about an imminent water problem have fallen on deaf ears. It's remarkable, then, what an effect the Contra Costa newspapers had on the California Delta crisis.

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- Awarded to **the staff of Newsday**, Long Island, NY, for its enterprising coverage of the crash of TWA Flight 800 and its aftermath.
- *Also nominated as finalists:* The Philadelphia Inquirer staff and the St. Petersburg Times staff.

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- Awarded to **Eric Nadler, Deborah Nelson and Alex Tizon of The Seattle Times** for their investigation of widespread corruption and inequities in the federally-sponsored housing program for Native Americans, which inspired much-needed reforms.
- *Also nominated as finalists:* The Boston Globe staff and Jim Haner of The Baltimore Sun.

EXPLANATORY JOURNALISM

- Awarded to **Michael Vitez, reporter, and April Saul and Ron Cortes, photographers, of The Philadelphia Inquirer** for a series on the choices that confronted critically-ill patients who sought to die with dignity.
- *Also nominated as finalists:* John Crewdson of the Chicago Tribune and Gregory Kane and Gilbert Lewthwaite of The Baltimore Sun.

BEAT REPORTING

- Awarded to **Byron Acohido of The Seattle Times** for his coverage of the aerospace industry, notably an exhaustive investigation of rudder control problems on the Boeing 737, which contributed to new FAA requirements for major improvements.
- *Also nominated as finalists:* Celia W. Dugger of The New York Times and Craig Flournoy of The Dallas Morning News.

NATIONAL REPORTING

- Awarded to **the staff of The Wall Street Journal** for its coverage of the struggle against AIDS in all of its aspects, the human, the scientific and the business, in light of promising treatments for the disease.
- *Also nominated as finalists:* Ronald Brownstein of the Los Angeles Times and Bill Moushey of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

INTERNATIONAL REPORTING

- Awarded to **John F. Burns of The New York Times** for his courageous and insightful coverage of the harrowing regime imposed on Afghanistan by the Taliban.
- *Also nominated as finalists:* the Chicago Tribune staff and Tony Freemantle of the Houston Chronicle.

FEATURE WRITING

- Awarded to **Lisa Pollak of The Baltimore Sun** for her compelling portrait of a baseball umpire who endured the death of a son while knowing that another son suffers from the same deadly genetic disease.
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Last October, The Seattle Times published "Safety at issue: the 737" by Byron Acohido. The five-part series detailed rudder problems on the 737 and their possible implication in two fatal airline crashes.

Within 24 hours of the conclusion of the series, Boeing publicly acknowledged 737 rudder problems, followed by an offer to make major modifications soon made mandatory by the FAA. For this and other stories on aviation safety, Acohido was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Beat Reporting.

In December, Eric Nalder, Deborah Nelson and Alex Tizon produced a five-part series called "Tribal Housing: From Deregulation to Disgrace," which revealed widespread national misuse of federal money intended to shelter tribal families.

Subsequent congressional hearings and federal investigations supported their findings.



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Seattle Times reporters Deborah Nelson, Eric Nalder, Alex Tizon and Byron Acohido celebrate winning Pulitzer Prizes for Investigative and Beat Reporting.

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COMMENTARY

- Awarded to **Eileen McNamara of The Boston Globe** for her many-sided columns on Massachusetts people and issues.
- *Also nominated as finalists:* Tony Kornheiser of The Washington Post and Deborah Work of the Sun-Sentinel, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

CRITICISM

- Awarded to **Tim Page of The Washington Post** for his lucid and illuminating music criticism.
- *Also nominated as finalists:* Herbert Muschamp of The New York Times and Leslie Saven of The Village Voice, New York City.

EDITORIAL WRITING

- Awarded to **Michael Gartner of The Daily Tribune**, Ames, Iowa, for his common sense editorials about issues deeply affecting the lives of people in his community.
- *Also nominated as finalists:* Margaretta Downey of the Poughkeepsie (N.Y.) Journal and Peter Milius of The Washington Post.

EDITORIAL CARTOONING

- Awarded to **Walt Handelsman of The Times-Picayune**, New Orleans, La.
- *Also nominated as finalists:* Chip Bok of the Akron Beacon Journal and Jeff MacNelly of the Chicago Tribune.

SPOT NEWS PHOTOGRAPHY

- Awarded to **Annie Wells of The Press Democrat**, Santa Rosa, Santa Rosa, Calif., for her dramatic photograph of a local firefighter rescuing a teenager from raging floodwaters.
- *Also nominated as finalists:* Corinne Dufka of Reuters and Alexander Zemlianichenko of the Associated Press.

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

- Awarded to **Alexander Zemlianichenko of the Associated Press** for his photograph of Russian President Boris Yeltsin dancing at a rock concert during his campaign for re-election.
- *Nominated as finalists:* Jeffrey L. Brown of Copley Chicago Newspapers, Jon Kral of The Miami Herald, and Michele McDonald of The Boston Globe.

LETTERS

FICTION

"MARTIN DRESSLER: THE TALE OF AN AMERICAN DREAMER" by STEVEN MILLHAUSER (Crown)

HISTORY

"ORIGINAL MEANINGS: POLITICS AND IDEAS IN THE MAKING OF THE CONSTITUTION" by JACK N. RAKOVE (Alfred A. Knopf)

BIOGRAPHY

"ANGELA'S ASHES: A MEMOIR" by FRANK McCOURT (Scribner)

POETRY

"ALIVE TOGETHER: NEW AND SELECTED POEMS" by LISEL MUELLER (Louisiana State University Press)

GENERAL NON-FICTION

"ASHES TO ASHES: AMERICA'S HUNDRED-YEAR CIGARETTE WAR, THE PUBLIC HEALTH, AND THE UNABASHED TRIUMPH OF PHILIP MORRIS" by RICHARD KLUGER (Alfred A. Knopf)

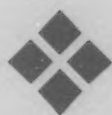
MUSIC

"BLOOD ON THE FIELDS" by WYNTON MARSALIS

THE PULITZER PRIZES

Awarded by Columbia University
on the recommendation of The Pulitzer Prize Board

Congratulations to
1997 Pulitzer Prize Winner
Lisa Pollak



Her story
‘The Umpire’s Sons’
was recognized for
Excellence in Newspaper Work - Feature Writing

The Baltimore Sun’s management and staff congratulate feature writer Lisa Pollak on winning the 1997 Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing.

While the nation focused on an ugly incident, Lisa saw a story no one else was telling: What it was like to be John Hirschbeck – to survive the death of one son and to wake up every day knowing that another son suffered from the same disease.

The Sun would also like to congratulate three Pulitzer finalists:

- Greg Kane and Gilbert Lewthwaite for their story “Witness to Slavery,” which was nominated as a Pulitzer finalist for Explanatory Journalism. Their work went to the source for the story on slavery in the Sudan.
- Jim Haner, whose in-depth look at serious conflicts of interest among Baltimore’s housing inspectors was nominated as a finalist for Investigative Journalism.

All four of these excellent journalists have gone beyond the story, adding depth and understanding to The Sun and our community.

Congratulations to all.



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The Atlantic Monthly
 GQ
 The New Yorker*
 Story

ESSAYS & CRITICISM

The American Lawyer
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SINGLE-TOPIC ISSUE

Life
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 Scientific American
 SmartMoney
 Sports Illustrated

* 2 Nominations

NATIONAL MAGAZINE AWARDS

Sponsored by the American Society of Magazine Editors,
 with staff support from the Magazine Publishers of America, and administered by
 the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism



Other journalists have won Pulitzers
for staring death in the face.
These three won for allowing our readers to do it.

Congratulations to Ron Cortes, April Saul and Michael Vitez of The Philadelphia Inquirer for winning this year's Pulitzer Prize for explanatory journalism.

Their series, *Final Choices: Seeking the Good Death*, brought readers intimately close to one thing we all have in common ... the end of life.

Vitez's words, and the photographs of Cortes and Saul, put human faces on the choices we all could encounter:
what it's like to let go of a loved one in the ICU, to die at home with hospice care, or to contemplate physician-assisted suicide.

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great journalism helps readers to confront those issues themselves.

The Inquirer

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Tim Page: Pulitzer Prize Winner

for
Distinguished
Criticism

The thing that separates Tim Page from the mass of critics is not his immense technical grasp of music from Palestrina to Steve Reich. It is his ability to write about classical music in a way that opens it up to a huge universe of readers. He has found ways to relate music to Stonehenge, Gertrude Stein, classified ads, Thomas Pynchon, Jack Nicholson, butterfat and the Italian scientist Guglielmo Marconi — without in any way diminishing the sophistication of his essays.

The Washington Post

To read the full text of Tim Page's
Pulitzer Prize-winning articles,
go to The Post on the Internet at
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/pulitzer>



First Amendment Watch

by Ellen Alderman and Caroline Kennedy

Death by Television

So you think the \$5.5 million Food Lion judgment against ABC was bad for the press? How about three recent rulings in which courts declared that plaintiffs can try to hold the press liable for injuries, including death, suffered by people who have been the subject of news reports?

The most recent ruling came in an offshoot of the "tele-psyhic" case, in which a reporter for ABC's *PrimeTime Live* went undercover with a hidden camera to work in the office of a telephone psychic hotline service (see "Hidden Camera: A Million-Dollar Peek," *CJR*, March/April 1995). The reporter secretly videotaped conversations between two self-described psychics, Mark Sanders and Naras Kersis, which suggested that they did not believe in the advice they were dispensing over the phone. These conversations were broadcast as part of an exposé on *PrimeTime Live* in February 1993. The two men sued ABC for invasion of privacy. Sometime after the broadcast, Kersis, a recovering alcoholic, relapsed into alcoholism and died. A Los Angeles jury awarded Sanders \$1.2 million in the privacy suit, but in January 1997, a California court of appeals overturned that verdict. The court found that Sanders did not have a reasonable expectation of privacy in his conversations because he worked in an open room with several other employees.

Meanwhile, Kersis's parents sued. They claimed that their son had been so humiliated by the broadcast that he resumed drinking and that ABC was responsible for his death. A federal district court dismissed the case. But in November 1996 the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the dismissal, and said the case should go to trial. Neville Johnson, the Kersis family attorney, trumpeted in his press release, "The decision is the first in the United States to allow a wrongful death action to proceed because of an alleged invasion of privacy by the news media." A trial date has not been set.

Last December, in a similar case, Rhode Island's highest court also allowed a suit to proceed to trial in which a TV reporter was accused of negligently causing a man's death. In *Cliff v. Narragansett TV*, a woman rushed home from work one morning after her husband phoned to tell her he

was planning to commit suicide. She tried to convince him to change his mind, but he cut his throat with a piece of broken glass and began firing guns in the house and into the surrounding shrubbery. The police arrived, the woman fled, and an expert in hostage negotiations attempted to dissuade the man. Reporters from the local media arrived on the scene.

Around 5 P.M., without informing the police or the family, a reporter from WPRI in Providence phoned the house and interviewed the distraught man. The reporter told him that the taped interview would be broadcast later on the 6 o'clock news. At 6:04 P.M. the WPRI journalist, reporting live from outside the house, introduced the interview. At 6:07 P.M. the man killed himself. The police entered the house immediately and found that the TV sets were tuned to WPRI.

The widow sued the TV station, claiming that the actions of the reporter and the station were negligent under the circumstances and caused her husband's death. In December 1996, the Supreme Court of Rhode Island held that the case could go to trial. The court refused to find any special First Amendment defense against a negligence claim. Instead the court wrote, "We realize in expressing that belief that there are those both in and out of the press-media field who insist that the First Amendment is an impenetrable shield from both press criticism and civil liability. We also realize that First Amendment rights of the press are as much endangered by its zealots as by its critics."

Negligence by the media was also at issue in a 1996 Texas case, *Risenhoover v. England*, stemming from the failed 1993 raid on the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. During the raid, four BATF agents were killed and several others injured. The agents and the surviving relatives sued the *Waco Tribune-Herald* and its parent companies, Cox Texas Publications and Cox Enterprises, as well as KWTX Broadcasting Company. The plaintiffs claimed that an article published in the *Waco Tribune-Herald* the day before the raid, combined with the actions of TV reporters in the area around the compound, removed the element of surprise, thereby increasing the injuries suffered by the agents.

In West Texas, a federal district court admitted that it could find no case in which a journalist had been held liable for negligence in reporting on a law enforcement operation.

Ellen Alderman and Caroline Kennedy are attorneys who co-authored two best-selling books, In Our Defense and The Right to Privacy. This column is underwritten by the Janice and Saul Poliak Center for First Amendment Studies at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism.

THE HUGH M. HEFNER FIRST AMENDMENT AWARDS

Established in 1979 by the Playboy Foundation, the Hugh M. Hefner First Amendment Awards honor individual efforts in defense of the First Amendment. Since its inception, nearly 100 women and men have received the award.

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MISCELLANEOUS

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Still, the court objected to the journalists' conduct in an angry tone: "Common sense would dictate that a reporter on the scene would do everything possible to avoid detection when covering what is known to be a secret law enforcement operation. Instead, the media arrogantly descended on the compound as if the First Amendment cloaked them with immunity from acting as reasonable individuals under the circumstances."

The court found that the media had a duty not to negligently interfere with the agents' execution of arrest and search warrants, and that the First Amendment would not shield them from liability. The *Waco Tribune-Herald's* insurance company settled the claim out of court, over the newspaper's objections. The other defendants also settled.

Jonathan Hart, one of the defense attorneys, calls the judge's decision an "aberration" and remains confident that the newspaper would have prevailed at trial. He emphasizes that reporting and gathering news about government operations is a constitutionally protected activity at the core of the First Amendment. "If reporters can't show up at a government raid of a religious compound in which one hundred agents are involved, they might as well sit around the newsroom and wait for the press releases," says Hart. "I genuinely hope that this case will not discourage conscientious reporters from covering the actions of government."

That, of course, is the question. Until recently, the prevailing wisdom was that cases attempting to hold the press liable for the injuries or deaths of the subjects of news coverage would be dismissed right away. After these three cases, the press can no longer take that for granted.

Even if none of the plaintiffs ultimately prevail at the trial, the fact that they were allowed to get there at all is a significant blow to the media defendants who are forced into expensive legal proceedings or settlements. While the law remains unsettled, it is likely there are more negligence cases to come. ♦

Books

The Making of a Publisher

by Gloria Cooper

In the interest of full disclosure, it must be noted at the outset that in the course of her number-one best-selling memoir Katharine Graham makes a passing reference to "the fucking *Columbia Journalism Review*." The inspiration for that sentiment, expressed by the great lady publisher of *The Washington Post* in her annual letter to executive editor Ben Bradlee at the end of the momentous year of 1974,

is not entirely clear, but it seems to have had something to do with a vague anticipation of unwelcome articles in the aftermath of the stunning climax to the paper's coverage of the Watergate affair.

Other publications, in particular *The New Republic* and *The Washington Monthly*, get slammed more specifically for their "demonstrably wrong" and "outrageous" pieces on her handling of the long and painful pressmen's strike in the mid-1970s. A similar fate befalls the renowned Ben Bagdikian, a national editor for the *Post* who, since leaving the paper, Graham explains to her readers, has "made a cottage industry of criticizing us." Never mind that Bagdikian had been a prime mover in helping the paper catch up to *The New York Times* on the Pentagon Papers story — an achievement that finally managed, as Graham quotes Bradlee as saying elsewhere in the book, "to get the world to refer to the *Post* and *The New York Times* in the same breath." Having had the bad judgment to write the offending *Washington Monthly* piece, Bagdikian, KG observes in a memo to BB, is now an "ignorant biased fool."

Clearly, Graham, who turns eighty in June, does not



Katharine Graham

suffer critics gladly. And fortunately — at least as far as her book is concerned — she doesn't have to. The reviews have been universally favorable, the book-tour profiles flattering, the talk-show interviews fawning. No wonder. Everyone's a sucker for transformation stories, and the make-over of an insecure, dowdy, poor little rich girl into The Most Powerful Woman in America, framed within the parallel tale of how a puny third-rate daily changed into a fear-

some giant, is not to be resisted — certainly not by news junkies like you and me.

What becomes this legend most — and what appeals most to reviewers — is Graham's confession of inadequacy, the deeply rooted belief that she could not quite measure up, planted by Agnes Meyer, her egocentric, hard-drinking, depressive, demoralizing mother, and cultivated by Philip

PERSONAL HISTORY

BY KATHARINE GRAHAM

ALFRED A. KNOPF

644 PP. \$29.95

Graham, her egocentric, hard-drinking, depressive, demoralizing husband, to whom Katharine's father, the fabulously successful entrepreneur Eugene Meyer, handed the paper on a silver platter a few years after their marriage. True, the family portraits were by Steichen and the birthday music was by Serkin and the childhood camping trips were accompanied by seventeen pack horses and a staff of five. But there was also what she still remembers bitterly as the "first lavish compliment" her mother ever paid her, bestowed when the grown-up Katharine was planning a coming-out party for her own daughter Lally: "Darling, you are very good with lists."

Gloria Cooper is managing editor of the *Columbia Journalism Review*.

GAMMA LIAISON/DANA WAUER

And true, there were breakfasts with Felix Frankfurter and parties with the Alsops and Restons, trips to the ranch with Lady Bird and Lyndon and picnics with Jackie and Jack; there was even laughter and love between Kay and Phil — Phil, who “was the fizz in our lives.” But there were also his demeaning jokes at her expense, the conspiratorial put-downs by Agnes and Phil, his inhibiting stares when she ventured an opinion, and that cruelly amusing gift, the head of a pig, a sign from a French butcher-shop: his reminder to the mother of his four young children that she should watch her weight. Afraid of being boring, eager to please, Katharine soon became, by her own account, a “second-class citizen,” a “doormat wife,” “the drudge” who “liked to be dominated” by the “brilliant, charismatic, fascinating” Phil — in short, the most unlikely person in the world to succeed him as publisher of the increasingly influential *Washington Post*.

If low self-esteem combined with high achievement — a paradoxical condition not unheard of in the twentieth-

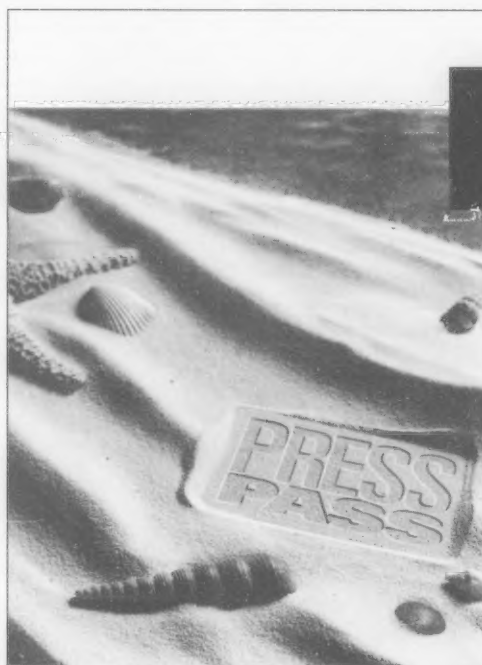
century American female — is an accurate headline here, it is also misleadingly incomplete. Even before her husband's suicide in 1963, Katharine had begun to show her stronger stuff. When he announced his intention to divorce her and marry an Australian *Newsweek* reporter (not the first of his affairs) and to buy out Katharine's 49 percent of the company's stock — the majority had been given by Eugene to his son-in-law because “no man should be in the position of working for his wife” — Katharine vowed to fight him for control. “I was not going to lose my husband *and* the paper,” she writes. “My intention to dig in was total.”

The contest was settled, of course, by Philip Graham's death. Still, had he lived to fight for the paper they both cared about so much, the smart money would have been on Kay. That she moved in fast — instinctively rejecting advice that she assume the title of president but leave the role of chairman to someone else — was not really so astonishing. After all, she was the daughter not only of Agnes, but also of Eugene.

From the moment of her inauspicious

introduction to the paper in 1933 — home for the summer from Madeira and puzzled by a chance remark, she was breezily told by her mother, “Oh darling, didn't anyone tell you? Dad has bought the *Post*” — it was the centerpiece of her life. It became at once an intense and unwavering bond between father and daughter, the subject of what she describes as a “constant conversation over the years about newspapers in general and the *Post* in particular.” In one of their many cross-country correspondences, Eugene wrote to his young daughter, “You ought to be in on the job of putting it to the top.” Katharine wrestled with that possibility in a letter to her sister Bis:

Putting aside an unanswerable question at this time, my ability to be a good reporter, which is a gift given by God to a very few, I mean GOOD reporter, the fact remains that what I am most interested in doing is labor reporting, possibly working up to political reporting later. . . . As you can see, that is no help to Dad. He wants and needs someone who is willing to go through the whole mill, from reporting, to circulation management and problems, to editorial writing, and eventually to be his assistant.



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This presents the payoff in problems . . . One, I detest beyond description advertising and circulation . . . Two, there is a question of point of view . . . And three, I doubt my ability to carry a load like *The Washington Post* . . . From Dad's point of view, I think it would mean something . . . such as companionship, a living connection with the next generation, and the knowledge that all that he was slaving to build was not going to stop with him . . .

It was 1937. She was all of twenty years old.

Meanwhile, she was learning to be a journalist. At a summer job on the *Mount Vernon Argus* in suburban New York, she wrote a bylined story on women doctors ("Quite professional," judged Eugene). At Vassar, she worked on the *Miscellany News*; later, as a student at the University of Chicago, she helped a stringer for the *Daily News* cover a strike at Republic Steel. A fan of "Terry and the Pirates," she proudly persuaded Eugene to pick it up for the *Post*. After college, there was a job at Scripps Howard's *San Francisco News*, where her assignments included the Warehousemen's Union (and where she got involved quite unprofessional-

ly, she realizes now, with the union's very attractive negotiator).

In 1939, it was back to the *Post*, to write light editorials and handle letters to the editor. During the early days of her marriage, while Phil was in the army and planning a career in law, she kept her hand in, writing stories and helping Eugene with the off-the-record stag dinners that brought the paper's editors and

In truth, Katharine
Graham knew more about
running the paper than
Eugene and Phil
put together when they
first took the job.

reporters together with administration bigwigs and visiting dignitaries.

On a special assignment from her father, she compared a number of papers for ideas and newsplay, adding to his list on her own initiative *PM* and *The New York Times*. In 1947, shortly after Eugene appointed her husband publisher, she began an eight-year run as the writer of a

weekly column on magazines. A stint in the paper's circulation department taught her how to handle "enraged subscribers."

She was closely involved with developments on the business side. She accompanied her husband everywhere, and when the acquisitions were being made — the broadcast stations, *Newsweek*, the Los Angeles Times-Washington Post News Service — she was in on them. Here is her account of a "supreme moment in the history of The Washington Post Company" — the day in 1954 that the family achieved its long-sought goal of acquiring the rival *Washington Times-Herald* from Robert McCormick's Chicago Tribune Company:

We were in Phil's office waiting for news . . . We all took turns talking to keep the line occupied. At last the board approved the deal, the check was delivered, and Colonel McCormick signed the agreement of sale . . . We were terribly moved, and excited beyond all imagining. We now had the morning field in Washington to ourselves . . . Daily circulation jumped immediately . . . That afternoon and evening, however, before we hit the streets with our combined papers, were a real challenge . . . We were running a more-than-double press run of a larger paper . . . Combining news and

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editorial was difficult, since we had two very opposite cultures to meld We started that night by running two equal sized names on the masthead The perception Phil and I shared was right This was the best short route to the future. At last we could believe that the *Post* was here to stay.

In truth, Katharine Graham knew more about running the paper — both sides of the paper — than Eugene and Phil put together when they first took the job. And, all the “quaking in

my boots” notwithstanding, when crucial decisions needed to be made — to hire or to fire, to buy or to sell, to publish or not — she made them. Whether Phil would have decided those critical matters in quite the same way, whether journalism and politics would have come to intersect at quite the same place and time, are obviously unanswerable questions, though the record suggests that the answer is no.

Politically, Katharine and Phil had

already diverged in 1952, when Phil, with his usual unbridled passion, threw the entire weight of the paper behind Eisenhower, while Katharine was “swept away with excitement by Stevenson.” Professionally, they played by different rules. Time and again, in recounting Phil’s actions as publisher — working feverishly to persuade Kennedy to pick Johnson as his running mate; convening a private meeting at which Phil and Supreme Court Justice Frankfurter managed to persuade civil-rights activist Joe Rauh to postpone the drive for school desegregation in favor of the more immediately attainable goal of voting rights; arranging a dinner for Senator John F. Kennedy to “sell himself” to *New York Times* publisher Orville Dryfoos and Washington bureau chief Scotty Reston; recommending presidential appointments to JFK; burying a story about a summer riot in Washington in exchange for a private promise of integrated community swimming pools from Truman’s top advisers — Katharine feels obliged to point out that while such close relationships between newspapers and government were usual, even common, in those days, they are unquestionably out of bounds now.

Philosophically, Phil viewed the paper as a means to a political end; Katharine was guided by Eugene’s conviction that “the American people could be relied upon to do the right thing when they know the facts.” They differed, too, in basic loyalties. Alone in their room after a late-night drinking session with Johnson, during which the senator from Texas had expressed in no uncertain terms his contempt for journalists — “You can buy any one of them with a bottle of whiskey,” the future president had said — Katharine rebuked her husband for letting him get away with it.

Indeed, when all is said and done — after the talks with Adlai and the walks with McNamara and the dances at Truman Capote’s grand masked ball; after the tragedy and comedy, the gossip and glamour, the humiliations and heroics — what lingers longest is the echo of that straight appraisal of herself half a century ago: “I wanted to be a journalist and my father had a newspaper.” One closes the book marveling anew at the forces that shape our history, and that made this woman one of them.

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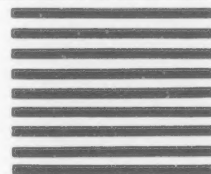
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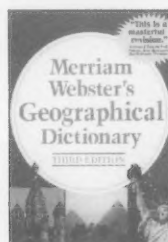


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Journalism for Dummies

by Diana B. Henriques

I have a high tolerance for entrepreneurial ego. I find even Donald Trump amusing in small doses. So how could Michael Bloomberg's fabled arrogance fail to entertain? In short, I expected to love *Bloomberg by Bloomberg*, the autobiography of the man who built the financial information service that bears his name — a service that I think is the most useful newsroom tool since the telephone. Instead, I read the book with a growing sense of hilarious dismay.

The hilarity arises because Michael Bloomberg, in a figurative sense, is a fellow who has never written a correction. Most real journalists have made a few mistakes; maybe correcting them in public keeps us human as we cover the mistakes of others. Bloomberg has missed that humbling experience because, by his account, he's never made any errors.

He was forced out of Salomon Brothers, where he built an early version of his service, because a rival had it in for him, not because he lacked diplomacy. The fledgling Bloomberg



Michael Bloomberg

weekend to cut eighteen inches off the tiny desks so he could shoehorn a few extra people into the trenches.

Like many of his counterparts, this self-proclaimed media mogul displays little but contempt for journalists. "Ignorance and arrogance are a deadly combination," he asserts. "They run riot in the profession of journalism." Elsewhere he notes, "Poll after poll shows that most people rank elected and appointed officials at the bottom of the 'most respected' list — right down with us journalists (where maybe I can understand the general contempt)."

But don't take it personally, folks. We're in good company. The world is full of people whom Bloomberg holds in contempt. "Typical company politics elsewhere stifle most free-thinking employees and discourage risk taking," he fumes. "The accounting oversight in most corporations prevents trying in a year the diverse creativity we institute in a month." Unlike Donald Trump, who seems to understand that praising his rivals only sweetens his victory over them, Bloomberg perversely boasts of winning the race against a

field of fools, knaves, and sluggards. Where is the honor in that?

So why should you bother wading through this hyperthyroid sales pitch at all, when you might be improving your mind with, say, the latest Dilbert volume? Because you ignore Bloomberg at your peril: he intends to redefine our profession if he can.

Today, he controls a global news wire, all-news radio stations, cable television programs, financial magazines, and even a book publisher. But his core business is renting out "Bloomberg's," as he modestly calls the box-like computer terminals that deliver global market information to his corporate customers. His rivals in this business are market-leading Reuters and second-place Telerate, the Dow Jones subsidiary, and their boxes come with well-respected news services attached. So Bloomberg needed a news service to keep his box competitive. (Imagine that the Sulzberger family is in the paper-milling business and just ginned up *The New York Times* as a way to sell more newsprint, and you have the general idea here.)

In early 1990, Bloomberg recruited reporter Matthew Winkler from *The Wall Street Journal* to build a news service for him. A year or so earlier, Winkler had co-written an article that portrayed Bloomberg's service as far superior to Telerate, and to Bloomberg's amazement, the *Journal* had printed it on page one although it was unflattering to another Dow Jones subsidiary. Before signing on, Winkler tested his future boss by asking if he would print an unflattering story about a major customer if the customer threatened to toss out his Bloomberg boxes in retaliation. Bloomberg said yes, as any self-respecting egotist would. Alas, Winkler did not ask the obvious litmus-test question: "Would you do what Dow Jones did — print a newsworthy but flattering story about a competitor who threatened your business?"

This book suggests the answer. Clearly, Michael Bloomberg didn't get into journalism to defend the First Amendment or to keep a watchful eye on the powerful or even to schmooze with stars; he came to make a buck by putting a Bloomberg box within reach of everyone in the world. The journal-

BLOOMBERG BY BLOOMBERG

BY MICHAEL BLOOMBERG

JOHN WILEY & SONS.

262 PP. \$24.95

news service was slow to get the credentials that its reporters needed to attend Federal Reserve and other official briefings in Washington and Tokyo because, we are told, the journalists on the committees that granted these essential press passes were stupid, jealous jerks, not because the company was combative and arrogant. While other media bosses at least profess to fret about the damage our craft inflicts on our families and our bodies, Bloomberg boasts of his staff's twelve-hour workdays and brags that he sent carpenters into his newsroom one

Diana B. Henriques is a financial investigative reporter for *The New York Times* and the author of *Fidelity's World*.

JAMES MCCOON/CANAL IMASON

ism business was simply one way to achieve that end.

Don't take my word for it. Here's how he gave Winkler his marching orders:

I handed him a three-page list of what Bloomberg Business News . . . should be doing. Our purpose was to do more than just collect and relay news; it should also, ethically, advertise the analytical and computational powers of the Bloomberg terminal by highlighting its capabilities in each news story. This would make each story better and, at the same time, make it easier to rent more terminals.

And now that he's here in the news business, Bloomberg is emulating other corporate-minded press potentates by transposing journalism into a key he can sing. He studied music on Wall Street, where the one paying the piper always calls the tune. It is here that my hilarity gave way to dismay. To show you why, I'm going to quote Bloomberg at some length, so buckle your seat-belts:

In our company, everybody's in one room and works together. The environment we've created at Bloomberg means we don't do anything independently of one another. We have been more successful in news because of that. Our reporters periodically go before our sales force and justify their journalistic coverage to the people getting feedback from the news story readers. Are the reporters writing stories that customers need or want? . . . In turn, the reporters get the opportunity to press the salespeople to provide more access, get news stories better distribution and credibility, bring in more business people, politicians, sports figures, and entertainers to be interviewed. Most news organizations never connect reporters and commerce. At Bloomberg, they're as close to seamless as it can get.

Bloomberg insists that his news people can call it as they see it. But, our mentor continues, "In today's world, the economics of publishing won't permit paying journalists to write what no one wants to read. I'm proud of the balance we maintain between the dollar sign and the written word."

Now, I can recall times when writers pursued stories that nobody really wanted to read — all that unpatriotic stuff from Vietnam, those overblown pieces on that two-bit burglary at the Watergate complex. How foolish we've been! The folks in advertising sales probably could have straightened us out years ago, if we'd just shared office space with them.

Bloomberg says he wrote this amateurish prose himself, but he acknowledges "invaluable help" from Matt Winkler, a veteran of the pro circuit who certainly should be held to its standards. And the book is dedicated to both men's offspring as "our attempt to answer the question 'What does Daddy do?'"

That's not the question uppermost in my mind, guys. I want to know if either of you understands that journalism, when practiced as the Founding Fathers suggested, is not merely a commercial venture. And I want to know what you will do on the inevitable day when good journalism is not good business. An independent biography might answer these questions. This sloppy and unreliable book does not.

Excerpts

HER WAY



FROM **BUYING THE NIGHT FLIGHT: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A WOMAN FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT** (updated edition), BY GEORGIE ANNE GEYER, BRASSEY'S, 378 PP. \$24.95.

You see, like so many women — and men as well — I did not know an awful lot of things in my life, and I did not experience many important ones. I never got married, never had children, never knew those special gifts of the supposedly "normal" life. I missed some stories and failed to understand others until too late. Because of the possibilities of American journalism and its great professional family, however, I was privileged to have nearly unlimited access to the centers of human talent and of the human spirit. I knew the best men in the world, and many of them even loved me as much as I loved them. My family blessed me with a real capacity to take a tremendous joy in living; and I had a small gift of writing that, combined with an insane curiosity and a Teutonic stubbornness, allowed me to do exactly what I wanted to do, and with very little wasted time.

Above all, I knew what I loved most and I followed it, and so, in the end, I had that special blessing of the wise St. Augustine, who told us poor mortals that we would only begin to know happiness through "knowing the order of the loves."

I knew what I had to do first — and that, I did.

Geyer is a nationally syndicated, award-winning journalist. Her books include Guerilla Prince: The Untold Story of Fidel Castro and Waiting for Winter to End: An Extraordinary Journey through Soviet Central Asia.

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JOHN PAUL, SUPERSTAR

FROM **HIS HOLINESS: JOHN PAUL II AND THE HIDDEN HISTORY OF OUR TIME**, BY CARL BERNSTEIN AND MARCO POLITI. DOUBLEDAY, 582 PP. \$27.50.

John Paul II was the first pope to understand the television era, the first one who mastered the medium, who could handle a microphone, who was used to improvising, who wasn't afraid of performing in public.

Inevitably (and to his great advantage) a war of one-upmanship developed between a pope seeking to impress his audiences (aided by media advisers who were learning quickly) and TV reporters determined to make every broadcast an extraordinary event. Thus agents of the most skeptical and cynical mass media in the world wound up exalting the Roman pontiff in a manner previously unknown and on a scale unique to his person.

Masses celebrated by Pope Wojtyla became epic performances. Local organizers felt compelled to create more and more fantastic stage designs for his open-air events, turning the papal platforms on which John Paul II celebrated masses into gargantuan Hollywood sets . . .

But the pope, fully aware of the profane elements surrounding his appearances (which in richer countries were partly financed through the sale of papal souvenirs), realized that all



this was an opportunity for communication. He spoke in a dozen languages. He agreed to wear any of an incredible variety of hats that people offered him: student berets, Mexican sombreros, feathered Indian war bonnets, pith helmets. In Africa he put on goatskins and posed while grasping the spear of a tribal chieftain. In the American West he emerged from a tepee in a fringed chasuble; in Phoenix a group of Native Americans placed him on a revolving platform that turned him around like some sort of sacred wedding cake so that everyone in the audience

could see and admire him.

The papal entourage quickly came to favor this kind of atmosphere and spectacular hype. In keeping with the strategy of Joaquín Navarro-Valls, hired as the Vatican spokesman in 1984 — a former medical doctor, a correspondent for the Spanish newspaper *ABC*, and a member of *Opus Dei* — TV coverage was given preferential treatment. On the TV screen, as the pope and Navarro-Valls well understood, glory would invariably overshadow problems, emotion would overwhelm insight. Any uncomfortable questions from print reporters would be drowned out.

Bernstein is the Pulitzer Prize-winning co-author of All the President's Men. Politi has covered the papacy for the past nineteen years for Italy's La Repubblica and Il Messaggero.

FEAR AND FAVOR

FROM **NEWHOUSE: ALL THE GLITTER, POWER, AND GLORY OF AMERICA'S RICHEST MEDIA EMPIRE AND THE SECRETE MAN BEHIND IT**, BY THOMAS MAIER. JOHNSON PRESS, 464 PP. \$20. (introduction to the paperback edition)

When *Newhouse* won the 1995 "best media book" prize from the National Honor Society in Journalism and Mass Communication, my wife Joyce and I traveled to Washington, D.C., to attend the awards dinner.

After the ceremony, a journalism teacher living in New Jersey — where the Newhouse newspaper chain is dominant — came up to my table and mentioned that she had never heard of the book.

No wonder. This book, as much a parable about American media power as it is a biography of Si Newhouse's family organization, underlines the deep problem for a democratic society when so few companies, like the Newhouses'

Advance Publications, control what we learn about our world. My experiences with this book only served to illustrate the extent of this power.

In effect, the Newhouse company banned any mention of this book in their publications. None of the Newhouse papers ever reviewed it. Undoubtedly, many people living in places like Cleveland, Portland [Oregon], New Orleans, and several other regions where Newhouse newspapers are dominant would be interested in knowing about who runs the only paper in town. Yet the Newhouse newspapers, the fourth largest chain in America, decided that it was best for their readers not to learn anything about the boss. When Liz Smith mentioned the upcoming *Newhouse* book as the lead item in her nationally syndicated column, none of the subscrib-

ing Newhouse newspapers used it, according to a computerized newspaper search.

Several writers confided they had thoughts of writing about Newhouse's power but were too afraid to do so. Most surprisingly, some top editors told me they couldn't express their opinions because they had signed a "gag agreement" not to discuss anything about the Newhouse organization even after they had left. The use of "gag agreements" and other implicit threats for speaking one's mind (similar to the restrictions in the tobacco industry for those who would speak out) seems extraordinary for a company which has reaped a fortune by employing the First Amendment.



Maier, a business and investigative reporter, has worked for Newsday since 1984.

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Sexual Health Coverage: Women's, Men's, Teen and Other Specialty Magazines

A Current-Year and Ten-Year Retrospective Content Analysis

Conducted by

Kim Walsh-Childers, Ph.D.,

University of Florida, College of Journalism and Communications for the

Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation

Magazines are an important medium as much for the range of topics they cover as for the specific audiences they reach. Collectively, magazines reach a broad cross-section of the American public. According to the 1996 Simmons annual survey of magazines, the 12 largest women's magazines — Better Homes & Gardens, Good Housekeeping, Family Circle, Ladies' Home Journal, McCall's, Woman's Day, Redbook, Cosmopolitan, Glamour, Mademoiselle, Self, and New Woman — had a combined circulation of more than 42 million. The top four teen magazines, Seventeen, YM, Teen Magazine, and Sassy, accounted for a circulation of 6 million plus. And, magazines targeting men — a rapidly growing market — also showed noteworthy readerships: Details, EM (Ebony Man), Esquire, GQ, Men's Fitness, Men's Health Magazine, and Men's Journal boasted a combined circulation of 3.9 million last year.

Traditionally, women's and teen magazines have focused their editorial content on fashion, beauty and entertainment; today, these magazines, as well as many newcomers to the market, regularly cover a range of other topics, including nutrition, health and fitness, career, sex and relationships, and reproductive and sexual health. Among some of the newest men's magazines, many of which have an overall health or fitness focus, articles on sex and sexual health topics are also common fare. Some magazine analysts have attributed growing magazine circulation figures in the 1990s to a move toward, in the words of one such industry insider, "bolder, racier ... and downright salacious" articles about sex. Along with a greater focus on sexual topics in general, however, examples can be found in a wide range of magazines of coverage of important sexual and reproductive health issues as well.

Men's Journal, for example, a magazine for men from the publisher of Rolling Stone, last year ran an article on the risks and benefits of female contraceptives; Essence, a magazine targeted to African-American women, wrote about AIDS in the family in December 1996; and, for three consecutive years, YM, a magazine for teen girls, has published a special pull-out guide in its February issue that has provided "the facts" on among a number of important sexual health topics including gynecological exams, birth control, and sexually transmitted diseases.

Recent surveys also indicate that magazines are considered important communicators of sexual and reproductive health information by many people today. According to a 1997 Kaiser Family

Foundation survey, three-quarters of adult men and women consider magazines an "important" source of information on such topics as birth control, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS. Half of these people say the information magazines provide on these topics is frequently information readers are not likely to get from other sources. For teens, magazines appear to be an especially important information source. Of the seven in ten teenage girls who reported reading magazines regularly, in another Foundation survey, half (51%) say they use magazines for information on sex, birth control, or ways to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, and most of these magazine readers (69%) say this is information that they don't get from other sources.

To date, little research exists about the scope and context of magazine coverage of sexual issues, particularly sexual health topics. Previous studies have focused on coverage in select types of magazines, for example those targeting teen readers, or of specific issues, such as abortion.

To learn more about the role magazines collectively play today as communicators on a range of sexual health topics, the Kaiser Family Foundation commissioned researchers at the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications to conduct an extensive study of the sexual content in popular women's, men's, teen, and other specialty magazines. The most exhaustive and comprehensive content analysis of its kind, the study examined 50 of the most widely read magazines over a current-year sample. Researchers also looked at shifts in coverage of sexual health and other sexual topics through a ten-year review of 12 women's magazines and four teen girl magazines.

In both the current-year and retrospective studies, magazines were analyzed for the scope and depth of coverage of sexual health topics in the context of coverage of sexual issues in general. Specifically, the study coded mentions as well as more in-depth coverage of select sexual health topics — contraception, pregnancy (both planned and unintended), abortion, emergency contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS. Articles about other (non-sexual health) topics dealing with sexual activity were also coded for context. For each year studied, a six-issue sample of each magazine included in the sample was reviewed and coded. Only editorial content (feature pieces, news mentions, advice columns, letters to the editor, etc.) was examined.

A SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Summarized here are the results from the three research components of this study, which include: a current-year (July 1995-June 1996) analysis of women's, men's, and teen magazines; a current-year analysis of specialty magazines (African-American, health/fitness, sports/music, parenting, and bride); and a ten-year (1986-1996) retrospective study of women's and teen magazine content. The retrospective study compares coverage across three time periods spanning ten years: July 1986-December 1989; January 1990-December 1992; and January 1993-June 1996.

The complete findings from the first analysis — Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazine Coverage of Sexual Health Issues, July 1995-June 1996 — follow this summary. The fullset of results from the other two analyses — Specialty Magazine Coverage of Sexual Health Issues, July 1995-June 1996 and Women's and Teen Magazine Coverage of Sexual Health Issues Over a Decade, 1986-1996 — are included in the final report of this research, which is available by calling the Kaiser Family Foundation's publications request line at 1 (800) 656-4533. (Ask for Publication #1258).

Women's, Men's, And Teen Magazine Coverage of Sexual Health Issues, July 1995-June 1996

Today, women's, men's, and teen magazines cover a range of important sexual health topics, including contraception, unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS, as well as a broad range of other sexual issues.

- In women's magazines, a third (34%) of all articles on any sexual issue *focused* on sexual health; in men's magazines, more than a quarter (28%) of these articles *focused* on a sexual health topic.
- Two out of every five (42%) articles about sexual issues in teen magazines *focused* on a sexual health issue.

While most magazine coverage dealing with sexual issues was not specifically focused on sexual health, all three types of magazines often included sexual health information in their coverage of other sexual topics:

- In teen magazines, more than half — 57 percent — of sexual (though not specifically sexual health) coverage included mention of contraception, unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and/or HIV/AIDS.
- In women's and men's magazines, approximately two out of every five articles mostly about some other sexual topic included information about one of these issues.

Coverage of Sexual Health Topics

Looking specifically at coverage *focused* on sexual health issues, there were significant differences in which specific topics women's, men's, and teen magazines were most likely to address:

- Women's and teen magazines emphasized pregnancy-related topics (12% and 13% of all coded articles, that is, articles on any sexual topic). Women's magazines were most likely to *focus* on planned pregnancy, and teen magazines on unintended pregnancy.
- The sexual health issues women's magazines were next most likely to *focus* on were abortion (7% of all coded articles) and contraception (6%).
- In teen magazines, sexually transmitted diseases — HIV/AIDS

as well as other STDs — were the *focus* of coverage in 8 percent of all coded articles. Abortion was the only sexual health issue coded for in this study that was not the *focus* of any teen magazine article during the review period.

- Sexual health coverage for men's magazines appeared to be largely about HIV/AIDS (14% of all coded articles) — which was more than twice the attention devoted to the next most commonly covered issue, contraception (7% of all coded articles). Men's magazine coverage of contraception was mostly about condoms, and to a lesser extent, vasectomies.
- Emergency contraception was infrequently covered in all three magazine types — either as the *focus* of an article (only in teen magazines was it the *focus* of an article during the period reviewed) or even as a mention in coverage.
- Outside of women's magazines, abortion was rarely covered.

Coverage of Contraception

Women's, men's and teen magazines stressed condom use in coverage about contraception. Discussions of other methods in coverage of contraception varied considerably among the three magazine types.

- Women's magazines made mention of a broad range of contraceptive options in coverage — from the two most frequently discussed contraceptives, condoms (in 58% of articles mentioning contraception) and the "Pill" (40%), to less frequent mentions of newer methods such as Norplant (12%) and Depo-Provera (2%).
- Condoms were named in three out of four (75%) articles in both men's and teen magazines mentioning contraception. The only other method mentioned in men's magazines during the study period was vasectomy, the only other male-controlled method available today.
- After condoms, teen magazines were mostly likely to include information about birth control pills (42% of articles mentioning contraception). About a quarter (25%) of these articles wrote about spermicides.

The health benefits of contraceptive use — such as protection against unintended pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease — were discussed more often than health risks in most magazine coverage. Effectiveness of contraception was discussed, on average, less frequently than the health effects.

- Information about the health benefits of contraceptive use was included in about a quarter of coverage in women's, men's and teen magazines that made any mention of contraception. Health risks associated with contraception were mentioned less often in men's magazines (13% of articles mentioning contraception) and hardly at all in teen magazines (less than 1%). Women's magazines were almost equally likely to mention health benefits as risks (23% versus 21% of articles mentioning contraception).
- Contraceptive effectiveness was mentioned in about one of every ten articles including information about contraception in women's (12%) and men's (13%) magazines. In teen magazines, 17 percent of articles discussed contraceptive effectiveness.

Teen magazines also included information about where to get contraception — in about two of every five (17%) articles including any mention of contraception.

Coverage of Pregnancy

Women's and teen magazines' coverage of sexual health issues largely focused on pregnancy, but among women's magazines the emphasis was mostly on planned pregnancy and in teen magazines it was on unintended pregnancy as reflected by the number of mentions of related issues of each:

- A planned pregnancy was referred to in 61 percent of women's magazine articles that had any information about pregnancy; unintended pregnancy was mentioned in fewer articles (45%).
- Teen magazine coverage of pregnancy was entirely focused on unintended pregnancy; there were no mentions of planned pregnancy in any of the teen magazines reviewed during the study period.

Men's magazines very infrequently covered pregnancy. The coverage that did exist looked at the social and financial implications of pregnancy. Women's and teen magazines, whether discussing planned or unintended pregnancy, tended to address more personal concerns such as health risks or emotional consequences in addition to bigger social issues.

Coverage of Abortion

Abortion received significant attention only from women's magazines. As with coverage of pregnancy, men's magazines wrote about abortion generally as a broader social concern — focusing on clinic violence or legislative and judicial policy — often prompted by breaking news. Women's magazines, in addition to reporting on these issues, also discussed the personal choices and emotional issues associated with abortion. Teen magazines did not include any articles focused on abortion during the study period, and only one article mentioned abortion.

- Almost one out of every two (46%) articles about abortion in women's magazines discussed decision-making associated with choosing abortion. A third (36%) discussed the emotional consequences associated with abortion. A third (36%) of articles about abortion also addressed clinic violence.
- Among men's magazines, 40 percent of the articles mentioning abortion discussed clinic violence, legislative/judicial policy, and/or decision making.

Medical or drug treatment alternatives to a surgical abortion procedure — namely, mifepristone (RU-486), which recently underwent clinical trials in this country, and methotrexate, a drug combination currently available in the U.S. — were only mentioned in women's magazines, and even then still relatively infrequently.

- 14 percent of women's magazine articles mentioning abortion discussed mifepristone; 7 percent wrote about methotrexate. Neither men's nor teen magazines mentioned either medical procedure in the editions reviewed.

Coverage of Sexually Transmitted Diseases Other than HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS was the most frequently and extensively covered sexually transmitted disease. Coverage of other STDs appeared to be most often treated as a general problem in women's and teen magazines, as opposed to focusing on specific STDs. Men's magazines included mention of a broader range of different kinds of STDs.

- In teen magazines, 92 percent of coverage including information about STDs did not specify a certain STD; 67 percent of women's magazine coverage did not.

- The STDs most often mentioned by men's magazines were: herpes (75% of coverage mentioning STDs); gonorrhea and syphilis (38% each); and chlamydia (25%).

All three magazine types mostly focused on risk and prevention of STDs in coverage about the epidemic. Men's magazines also devoted attention to treatment and symptoms.

Coverage of HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS coverage was evident in all three magazines, especially teen magazines and men's magazines, which largely focused on HIV/AIDS in coverage of sexual health issues. Men's magazines covered a range of topics related to HIV/AIDS including risk, prevention, testing, and treatment. Teen magazines were more focused on education and risk.

- Much of men's magazine coverage of HIV/AIDS addressed risk and/or treatment — one out of every two (50%) articles mentioning the disease raised at least one of these topics. Prevention was also fairly frequently discussed both in terms of education (25% of articles mentioning HIV/AIDS) and condoms (20%).
- Two out of every five (38%) articles mentioning HIV/AIDS in teen magazines included information about risk. Women's magazine articles about HIV/AIDS were most likely to mention testing (27%).

All three magazines focused mostly — in the case of teen magazines exclusively — on sexual transmission, although men's magazines also included mentions of non-sexual transmission routes such as IV drug use or through a blood transfusion (30% of articles mentioning HIV/AIDS).

Coverage of Other Sexual (Non-Sexual Health) Topics

Attention to other sexual topics also provided insight about what information readers got from magazines about sexual health issues. As was noted previously, significant percentages of coverage focused on other sexual topics included mentions of such issues as contraception, unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS. Women's and men's magazines' attention to non-sexual health issues focused on sexual activity in general, enhancing sex appeal, sexual fantasies, etc. Teen magazines mostly focused on decision-making about becoming sexually active.

Type of Coverage and Writer Identification

The format of sexual health coverage in women's, men's, and teen magazines is very telling about how each communicates sexual health information to its readers. Women's magazine coverage — 43 percent of articles focused on a sexual health issue — tended to be lengthier feature pieces, followed by a third (36%) that were briefer "news mentions." Men's magazine coverage was just the opposite with 60 percent of sexual health articles in the form of "news mentions," coverage largely driven by a news event, followed by some feature length coverage (20%). Most sexual health coverage in teen magazines — 56 percent — was in the form of advice columns responding to teens' questions about using birth control, preventing sexually transmitted diseases, or some other sexual health concern. Letters to the editor, another outlet for reader correspondence, was also a common source of sexual health coverage (19%).

Both women's and teen magazines appear to have dedicated staff to write sexual health articles (16% and 31%, respectively, of authors of sexual health coverage.) All three magazine types also relied on freelancers for these pieces. While women's and men's magazines included some articles by "expert" authors, significant percentages of sexual health articles in all three magazine types were unable to be coded as no information was given about the author of the piece.

Specialty Magazine Coverage of Sexual Health Issues, July 1995-June 1996

Among the different specialty magazines reviewed in this study, there was significant variation both in terms of amount as well as content of sexual health coverage during a current-year sample. African-American, parenting, and health/fitness magazines all devoted noteworthy amounts of editorial attention to sexual issues, both sexual health and other sexual topics; however, each type of magazine focused on a different set of issues. African-American magazines — several of which were also included in the analysis of women's, men's and teen magazines discussed above — covered a range of sexual health issues, mostly focusing on pregnancy (both planned and unintended) and STDs other than HIV. Parenting magazines stressed pregnancy, mostly planned. Health/fitness magazines most often covered HIV/AIDS. Sexual health content in the other specialty magazines in this study — music/sports and brides' — was limited and sporadic.

- The African-American magazine group — which includes both magazines targeted primarily to women, such as *Black Elegance* and *Essence*, as well as those read mostly by men, *Ebony Man*, for example — covered pregnancy (24% of all articles coded, that is, articles on any sexual topic), abortion (3%), HIV/AIDS (3%) and other sexually transmitted diseases (9%).
- In parenting magazines, nearly nine out of every ten (88%) articles mentioning pregnancy dealt with planned pregnancy. Generally, these articles wrote about prenatal care (50% of articles mentioning pregnancy), delivery (50%), and birth (75%).
- Treatment for people living with HIV was a common focus of articles about HIV in health/fitness magazines (80% of articles mentioning HIV/AIDS). Risk of getting the disease was also mentioned in half of these articles.
- Just two articles in the music/sports category of magazines *focused* on a sexual health issue — HIV/AIDS. Brides' magazines included no articles mostly *focused* on a sexual health topic, and their limited coverage of other sexual issues focused on general sexual activity with some mention of sexually transmitted diseases in this coverage.

Women's And Teen Magazine Coverage of Sexual Health Issues Over a Decade, 1986-1996

Over the last ten years, both women's and teen magazines increased significantly the amount of coverage devoted to sexual issues. Among a select group of 12 women's magazines that were studied between 1986-1996, attention to sexual health issues remained relatively constant, while coverage of other sexual issues increased. Among the four leading teen magazines studied over the same decade, the increase in coverage is accounted for as much by the greater attention to sexual health issues as other sexual issues.

Women's Magazines

The women's magazines included in this decade-long study appear to have focused generally the same amount of attention to contraception, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS over the years. The one exception was pregnancy, which saw a slight decrease in recent years, but which still remained the most commonly covered sexual health issue among women's magazines in recent years.

While articles in which pregnancy was the primary focus declined, mentions of unintended pregnancy in sexual coverage increased over the years. By the mid-1990s, half of articles mentioning pregnancy wrote about unintended pregnancy. There were noteworthy increases in attention to a variety of other related issues as well, including the social, financial, and emotional consequences associated with unintended pregnancy. During the same time period the references to planned pregnancy declined.

Another change in women's magazine coverage into the 1990s were which and how often specific contraceptives were mentioned. Condom mentions increased throughout the decade, so that by the mid-1990s condoms were included in one out of every two (54%) articles with any information about contraception. Attention to oral contraceptives remained consistent — around 40 percent of coverage mentioning contraception throughout the decade — making it the second most frequently named contraceptive. Newer contraceptives, including Depo-Provera and Norplant, began to receive coverage in the 1990s as they were introduced. Attention to the IUD declined in the middle of the decade, but started to rise in the last part of the study period.

Abortion coverage also saw some significant shifts in coverage over the decade. Medical or drug alternatives to a surgical procedure first appeared significantly in coverage in the 1990s as the prospects for their availability increased. There was also greater attention to clinic violence — up to being included in a third (34%) of articles mentioning abortion in the last period. Legislative and judicial policy was prominent in women's magazine coverage in the late 1980s, when the Supreme Court ruled on *Webster vs. Reproductive Health Services* and major pro-choice marches took place in Washington, D.C.

Articles mentioning HIV/AIDS as well as most other sexually transmitted diseases have been relatively consistent throughout the decade with particularly significant coverage in the early 1990s. In the most recent years, there appears a stronger focus on prevention — up to 41 percent of articles mentioning STDs — as compared to risk of contraction (38%) and treatment (16%).

Teen Magazines

Throughout the decade, the four leading teen magazines remained committed to covering unintended pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and other sexually transmitted diseases. While the magazines continued to include information about contraception in coverage, there was a decline in articles *focused* on contraception. They have also continued to work in mentions of sexual health issues — especially related to contraceptives and sexually transmitted diseases — into articles not specifically about sexual health.

Condoms increasingly became the contraceptive of note in teen magazines, mentioned specifically in nearly three quarters (72%) of articles mentioning contraception by the mid-1990s, up from 50 percent in the beginning of the decade. Conversely, coverage of

birth control pills declined significantly over the same period, perhaps reflecting the greater attention to protection from sexually transmitted diseases, especially HIV/AIDS. Comparing the first period studied to the last, teen magazines increasingly discussed more specific STDs, such as chlamydia, herpes, and trichomoniasis. There was also more attention to the risks of contraction and the rate of spread of STDs. While the magazines maintained a noteworthy degree of attention to prevention and symptoms, coverage of both issues appears to have declined in recent years.

Although teen magazines remained dedicated to drawing attention to the problem of unintended pregnancy, over the decade coverage appears to have shifted from emphasizing "pregnancy scares" to discussing actual unintended pregnancy outcomes, including birth, miscarriage, adoption, and abortion. As teen magazines began to discuss abortion in the 1990s, coverage focused on the consequences — social and emotional — associated with abortion.

Conclusions

In magazines today, readers can get information about a broad range of sexual health topics, such as the health benefits of contraception, the rate of unintended pregnancy, the availability of new medical alternatives to surgical abortion, the potential health consequences of sexually transmitted diseases, and how to protect against HIV/AIDS. Different types of magazines, however, cover these and other sexual health issues with varying degrees of depth and scope.

The women's men's, and teen magazines — as well as the various specialty magazines — reviewed for this study emphasize different sexual health topics in their coverage. The sexual health issues magazines focus on indicate what information their readers are most likely to take away, as well as possible gaps in awareness of other important concerns. For example, women's magazines emphasize pregnancy, and especially planned pregnancy, contraception, and abortion in sexual health coverage; men's magazines mostly address sexual health concerns such as the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and the few male-controlled methods of contraception; and teen magazines focus on the potential adverse outcomes of sexual activity, such as sexually transmitted diseases and, particularly, unintended pregnancy. They also address the difficult decisions many teens face about whether to become sexually active.

Specialty magazines also cover sexual health topics but, generally, more narrowly depending on their area of focus — for example, pregnancy is the sexual health issue most often addressed in parenting magazines and the health risks of HIV/AIDS or other sexual issues in health and fitness magazines. Some specialty magazines — such as sports and music and brides' magazines — tend to cover sexual health more sporadically, and rarely as the main focus of an article. In these magazines, a sexual health topic may be covered in the context of the industry or individuals they focus on. For example, *Sports Illustrated* has written about Magic Johnson's experiences as an athlete living with HIV.

While magazines should be commended for the attention and information they provide on a range of sexual health topics, this research also reveals additional opportunities for magazines of all kinds to expand on coverage of some sexual health issues:

- Women's magazine coverage emphasizes planned pregnancy, contraception, and abortion; considerably less attention overall

is devoted to other critical sexual health issues facing women today, including HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancy.

- Sexually transmitted diseases, and particularly HIV/AIDS, receive prominent attention in many men's magazines, yet other reproductive issues such as pregnancy, abortion, and contraceptives other than the few male-controlled methods available today, appear to generate only limited editorial content.
- Teen magazines, in general, devote significant attention to at least two critical sexual health issues facing their readers today: unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Much of this coverage is in the form of advice columns — an important means of addressing the issues of greatest concern to teens — but readers could also benefit from more in-depth articles on these topics as well.
- Depending on the focus of the magazine, some specialty magazines cover a broad range of sexual health issues already, and may be able to expand coverage to include those specific issues that appear to be under-reported, for example, contraception in African American and parenting magazines, and unintended pregnancy in health/fitness magazines.

Even the minimal sexual health coverage in the music, sports, and brides' magazines indicates an opportunity to incorporate messages about sexual health even though much of the coverage is not focused on sexual health specifically.

Across all magazine types, the overall amount of attention that is already devoted to all sexual issues presents an opportunity — that in some magazines, especially teen magazines, is already being realized — to include information about sexual health topics. A mention about the responsibilities and potential consequences and risks that are associated with sexual activity can be especially effective messages in the context of articles that are about a broad range of sexual topics.

COVERAGE OF SEXUAL HEALTH AND OTHER SEXUAL ISSUES IN WOMEN'S, MEN'S, TEEN MAGAZINES, JULY 1995-JUNE 1996

The first of the three analyses of sexual content in magazines examines a current year of coverage in leading women's, men's, and teenage girls' magazines. A random sample of six issues each from 26 women's magazines, 8 men's magazines, and 4 teen magazines from July 1995 to June 1996 were analyzed for the scope and context of their coverage of sexual health topics — namely contraception, pregnancy (both planned and unintended), abortion, emergency contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS, and related topics — as well as other sexual issues. The results reported here are based on an analysis of 462 articles that focused on sexual topics.

For the purposes of this research, magazines have been grouped and the data analyzed collectively by readership — women, men, or teen girls. The findings discussed here are representative of coverage on average in a single issue of a particular type of magazine. Within each of three types of magazines studied, there was variation among specific magazines in terms of the level of atten-

tion generally, as well as specifically, to sexual health topics.

The primary focus of this study was to assess the depth of coverage devoted to sexual health issues — for example, which topics were covered most frequently, and which less often; what related topics were written about; what kind of expert sources or referrals were included; and who was presented as being most affected by the topic of focus. To establish the context for sexual health coverage, researchers also documented the volume of coverage devoted primarily to sexual health topics, in comparison to coverage mostly about sexual topics that was not health-related.

Overview

On average, women's magazines devoted 46 column inches — or approximately 1-1/2 pages — of text per issue to a combination of sexual health articles of varying length and depth, including feature length pieces, news mentions, Q&A, editorials, etc. Another 104 column inches — or roughly 3-1/2 pages — of text was devoted to coverage in which the main focus was some other sexual (non-sexual health) topic, such as sexual attraction, sexual fantasies, sexual dysfunction, etc. Men's magazines, generally, included twice as much coverage primarily focused on a non-sexual health topic — 124 column inches or more than 4 pages of text per issue — as compared to coverage focusing mostly on a sexual health topic — 49 column inches or approximately 1-1/2 pages of text per issue. In teen magazines, equal amounts of text were focused on sexual health coverage — 31 column inches or 1 page — as on other sexual topics — 46 column inches or 1-1/2 pages.

Within all three magazine types, the amount of editorial focusing primarily on sexual health as compared to other sexual topics varied significantly from one magazine to the next. The amount of text in individual women's magazines focused primarily on sexual health issues ranged from nothing at all in one magazine (devoted exclusively to beauty and fashion) to 141 column inches — or nearly 5 pages — in a single issue of another women's magazine. Similarly, one men's magazine in the study included no articles in which the main focus was sexual health, while another provided in one issue 90 column inches — or 3 pages — of coverage. There was equal range of coverage of other sexual (non-sexual health) topics among individual magazines.

As the sheer amount of text (as defined by column inches) about sexual health and other sexual topics suggests, the majority of articles — including feature length pieces, news mentions, Q&A, editorials, etc. — also tended to focus on sexual topics other than one

of the sexual health issues coded for in this study. Overall, approximately a third (34%) of all articles coded — that is, any article primarily about a sexual topic — in the women's magazine group was mostly about a sexual health topic, such as contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, or HIV/AIDS. More than a quarter — 28 percent — of men's magazines' sexual coverage emphasized one of these sexual health issues. And, among teen magazines, 42 percent of all coded articles focused on sexual health.

A closer examination of coverage focused on a specific sexual health issue indicates that women's and teen magazines were most likely to focus on pregnancy (12% and 13%, respectively, of all articles coded, that is, articles on any sexual topic). Other frequently covered sexual health topics in the women's magazine group were abortion (7% of all articles coded) and contraception (6%). After pregnancy-related coverage, teen magazines were most likely to include coverage focused on HIV/AIDS (8% of all articles coded) and other sexually transmitted diseases (8%). HIV/AIDS was the issue most often emphasized in coverage of sexual health issues in the men's magazines (14% of all articles coded), twice as much space as was devoted to the next most frequently covered sexual health topic, contraception (7%). Neither the men's nor the teen magazines devoted significant editorial content to articles about abortion. None of the three magazine types made much mention of emergency contraception; about 3 percent of teen magazine coverage of sex-related articles focused primarily on the topic, and among women's and men's magazines less than 1 percent did.

While the women's, men's, and teen magazine groups each collectively devoted more editorial space to articles mostly about sexual topics other than sexual health, there were still significant mentions of such issues as contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS in non-sexual health coverage. Close to a third of the articles mostly about other sexual topics in both the women's (22%) and men's (23%) made mention of at least one sexual health topic, such as contraception or sexually transmitted diseases. More than one out of every two articles (57%) in teen magazines that was mostly about some other sexual topic contained at least some mention of a sexual health issue. In fact, much of the coverage about any sexual topic — including both sexual health and other — included some information about an important sexual health issue. Among teen magazines, nearly three quarters (72%) of all articles coded for this study included at least mention of contraception, pregnancy (planned or unintended), abortion, emergency contraception,

Table 1 Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazines: Average Column Inches Per Issue Devoted to Sexual Health and Other Sexual Coverage

Main Focus of Article	Women's n=327	Men's n=96	Teen n=39
Sexual Health			
Average column inches per issue	46	49	31
Range of column inches by issue	0-141	0-90	15-38
Other Sexual Topics			
Average column inches per issue	104	124	46
Range of column inches by issue	0-323	0-501	30-61
Total Column Inches			
Average column inches per issue	163	183	77
Range of column inches by issue	0-393	0-546	38-91

Table 2 Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazines: Main Focus of Article as Percent of All Sexual Health and Other Sexual Coverage

Main Focus of Article	Women's % of all coded articles n=327	Men's % of all coded articles n=96	Teen % of all coded articles n=39
Sexual Health	34%	28%	42%
Contraception	6%	7%	5%
Pregnancy (Planned/Unintended)	12%	2%	13%
Abortion	7%	1%	*
Emergency Contraception	*	*	3%
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (Non-HIV)	2%	3%	8%
HIV/AIDS	4%	14%	8%
Multiple Sexual Health Topics	3%	1%	5%
Other Sexual Topics	65%	71%	56%
Unable to Code	1%	1%	3%
Total Articles Coded	100%	100%	100%

Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding

STDs, or HIV/AIDS. Approximately two out of five of all articles coded in women's and men's magazines articles included mention of one of these sexual health topics.

Coverage of Contraception

Women's Magazines. Coverage of contraception in the women's magazines included mention of a variety of contraceptive methods. The methods most often named were: condoms (58% of articles mentioning contraception); oral contraceptives (40%); and diaphragms (19%). Most other contraceptive options were mentioned, although with less frequency.

Discussion of Norplant in the women's magazines was strongly correlated with mention of the health risks of contraceptive use, while mention of the method was not associated with mentions of legislative or judicial issues concerning contraceptive use. This suggests that lawsuits by women who had used Norplant was not the focus of the magazines' coverage of Norplant.

Overall, women's magazines were about equally likely to mention the health risks and benefits of contraceptive use. A quarter of all articles including information about contraception addressed the health benefits (23%) associated with contraceptive use, almost the same percentage as mentioned health risks (21%).

Men's Magazines. Condoms and vasectomy — the two male-controlled contraceptive options available today — were the only specific birth control methods mentioned by name in articles mentioning contraception in the men's magazines reviewed for this study. Three out of four (75%) of the articles containing any contraceptive information mentioned condoms, and 13 percent of those articles mentioned vasectomy. Men's magazines coverage of contraceptive-related topics was also fairly limited. The health benefits of contraception appeared in one out of four (25%) articles containing contraceptive information. Thirteen percent (13%) of these articles mentioned contraceptive effectiveness, the same percentage as mentioned health risks associated with contraceptives.

Teen Magazines. In the teen magazines, a relatively narrow range of contraceptive methods was mentioned. In the issues reviewed for this study, articles about contraception mentioned specifically birth control pills, condoms, spermicides, natural family planning

(rhythm method), and abstinence. Condoms were the method of contraception most often referred to by name. Among articles in which contraception was mentioned, three out of four specifically named condoms and 42 percent, the Pill. One of every four articles containing any information about contraceptives mentioned spermicides.

Teen magazines discussed the health benefits of contraceptive use in one out of every four articles (25%) mentioning contraception; coverage of health risks associated with some contraceptives

was rare (less than 1% of these articles). Contraceptive effectiveness and where to get contraception were topics raised in approximately one out of every five articles mentioning contraception (17% of articles mentioning contraception for both).

Table 3 Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazines: Percent of Articles Mentioning Sexual Health Topics

Mentions of Sexual Health Topics	Women's		Men's		Teen	
	% of ALL coded articles n=327	% of articles mention other sexual topics n=229	% of ALL coded articles n=96	% of articles mention other sexual topics n=71	% of ALL coded articles n=39	% of articles mention other sexual topics n=23
Contraception	14%	7%	12%	10%	39%	30%
Pregnancy	16%	6%	1%	1%	33%	30%
Planned	10%	2%	1%	1%	*	*
Unintended	7%	4%	1%	1%	33%	30%
Abortion	9%	2%	5%	4%	3%	*
Emergency Contraception	1%	*	*	*	3%	*
Sexually Transmitted Diseases (Non-HIV)	9%	5%	6%	6%	36%	25%
HIV/AIDS	12%	10%	22%	16%	21%	17%
Any Sexual Health Topic	43%	22%	39%	23%	72%	57%

Note: Totals may exceed 100% due to multiple mentions of sexual health topics in a single article.

Table 4 Mentions of Specific Methods of Contraception in Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazines

Specific Method of Contraception	Women's		Men's		Teen	
	% of ALL coded articles n=327	% of articles mentioning contraception n=43	% of ALL coded articles n=96	% of articles mentioning contraception n=8	% of ALL coded articles n=39	% of articles mentioning contraception n=12
Birth Control Pills	6%	40%	*	*	13%	42%
Condoms	9%	58%	6%	75%	23%	75%
Norplant	2%	12%	*	*	*	*
Depo-Provera	*	2%	*	*	*	*
Diaphragm	3%	19%	*	*	*	*
IUD	2%	12%	*	*	*	*
Cervical Cap	*	*	*	*	*	*
Sponge	2%	12%	*	*	*	*
Spermicides	1%	5%	*	*	8%	25%
Tubal Ligation	*	2%	*	*	*	*
Vasectomy	*	2%	1%	13%	*	*
Breast Feeding	*	*	*	*	*	*
NFP	2%	9%	*	*	3%	8%
Withdrawal	*	2%	*	*	*	*
Abstinence	1%	7%	*	*	3%	8%
Other	1%	7%	2%	25%	3%	8%

Note: Totals exceed 100% due to multiple mentions of contraceptive methods in a single article. Articles mentioning contraception are a subset of both sexual health and other sexual issues.

tioning pregnancy). Unintended pregnancies resulting in birth (14% of articles mentioning pregnancy) and the emotional consequences associated with an unintended pregnancy (12%) were also mentioned in some pregnancy-related coverage.

Men's Magazines. Pregnancy — planned or unintended — was rarely the focus of coverage in men's magazines. (Overall, only 2 percent of all articles coded focused primarily on pregnancy.) In the limited coverage of pregnancy, only the social and financial implications associated with a planned pregnancy were mentioned out of a variety of possible topics coded for in this study. Related

Coverage of Pregnancy

Women's Magazines. Pregnancy-related coverage in women's magazines was slightly more likely to focus on planned rather than unintended pregnancy issues. One-tenth of all sex-related coverage mentioned planned pregnancy, compared to 7% which mentioned unintended pregnancy. Birth was the most often mentioned topic related to a planned pregnancy: 37 percent of articles mentioning pregnancy made reference to a planned birth. The social or lifestyle implications of planned pregnancy were mentioned in close to a third (29%) of articles including information about pregnancy. Prenatal care and the health risks associated with a planned pregnancy were also fairly frequently mentioned in pregnancy articles (22% of articles mentioning pregnancy for both).

Unintended pregnancy was most often discussed in women's magazines in association with abortion (18% of articles men-

to unintended pregnancy, these same concerns plus the emotional consequences were raised.

Teen Magazines. Teen magazine coverage of pregnancy overwhelmingly focused on topics related to unintended pregnancy. In fact, none of the articles in the teen magazines reviewed for this study mentioned planned pregnancy. A third (33%) of all coded articles in teen magazines mentioned unintended pregnancy, and 13 percent were mostly about this topic. More than three in five (62%) articles that included information about pregnancy wrote about an unplanned pregnancy scare. About one-fourth of the articles containing any pregnancy information also mentioned the birth of a child from an unintended pregnancy (23%) and the emotional consequences associated with an unintended pregnancy (23%). The financial and social consequences of unintended pregnancy were also discussed in some of these articles (15% of articles mentioning pregnancy).

Coverage of Abortion

Women's Magazines. Surgical abortion — which was discussed specifically in one-third (32%) of women's magazine articles mentioning abortion — was more than twice as prevalent as mentions of medical abortion procedures, such as mifepristone/RU-486 (14%) or methotrexate (7%). Late-term abortions were mentioned extremely infrequently, in fewer than 1 percent of abortion-related coverage.

Women's magazine abortion coverage included mention of a variety of different abortion-related topics. The most common abortion subtopics were decision-making about whether to have an abortion (46% of articles mentioning abortion), the emotional consequences of abortion (36%), and clinic violence (36%). Among the 25 women's magazine articles containing any mention of abortion, 10 or more mentioned at least one of these three topics.

Men's Magazines. As is reflected in the minimal amount of abortion coverage in men's magazines overall — 1 percent of all sex-related coverage focused on abortion — there was limited discus-

Table 5 Mentions of Contraceptive-Related Topics in Women's, Men's and Teen Magazines

Contraceptive-Related Topic	Women's		Men's		Teen	
	% of ALL coded articles n=327	% of articles mentioning contraception n=43	% of ALL coded articles n=96	% of articles mentioning contraception n=8	% of ALL coded articles n=39	% of articles mentioning contraception n=12
Health Benefits	3%	23%	2%	25%	8%	25%
Health Risks	3%	21%	1%	13%	*	*
Effectiveness	2%	12%	1%	13%	5%	17%
Female Responsibility	1%	9%	*	*	3%	8%
Male Responsibility	1%	7%	*	*	3%	8%
Where to Get Contraceptives	1%	7%	*	*	5%	17%
Legislative/Judicial Policy	1%	5%	*	*	*	*

Note: Totals exceed 100% due to multiple mentions of contraceptive-related topics in a single article. Articles mentioning contraception are a subset of both sexual health and other sexual articles.

Table 6 Mentions of Planned Pregnancy and Related Topics in Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazines

Planned Pregnancy and Related Topics	Women's		Men's		Teen	
	% of ALL coded articles n=327	% of articles mentioning pregnancy n=57	% of ALL coded articles n=96	% of articles mentioning pregnancy n=1	% of ALL coded articles n=39	% of articles mentioning pregnancy n=13
Planned Pregnancy	18%	61%	1%	100%	*	*
Preconception Health Maintenance	*	8%	*	*	*	*
Prenatal Care	*	22%	*	*	*	*
Birth	7%	37%	*	*	*	*
Delivery	*	6%	*	*	*	*
Postnatal Care	*	10%	*	*	*	*
Miscarriage	2%	12%	*	*	*	*
Abortion	1%	4%	*	*	*	*
Social Implications	6%	29%	1%	100%	*	*
Financial Implications	2%	8%	1%	100%	*	*
Emotional Consequences	3%	14%	*	*	*	*
Health Risks	4%	22%	*	*	*	*

Note: Totals exceed 100% due to multiple mentions of pregnancy-related topics in a single article. Articles mentioning pregnancy are a subset of both sexual health and other sexual articles.

Table 7 Mentions of Unintended Pregnancy and Related Topics in Women's, Men's and Teen Magazines

Unintended Pregnancy and Related Topics	Women's		Men's		Teen	
	% of ALL coded articles n=327	% of articles mentioning pregnancy n=57	% of ALL coded articles n=96	% of articles mentioning pregnancy n=1	% of ALL coded articles n=39	% of articles mentioning pregnancy n=13
Unintended Pregnancy	7%	45%	1%	100%	33%	100%
Pregnancy Scare	1%	8%	*	*	21%	62%
Pregnancy Tests	1%	4%	*	*	*	*
Birth	2%	14%	*	*	8%	23%
Miscarriage	*	*	*	*	3%	6%
Abortion	3%	18%	*	*	3%	8%
Adoption	1%	6%	*	*	3%	8%
Social Implications	2%	8%	1%	100%	5%	15%
Financial Implications	1%	4%	1%	100%	5%	15%
Emotional Consequences	2%	12%	1%	100%	8%	23%
Health Risks	*	2%	*	*	*	*
Risk of Unintended Pregnancy	2%	8%	*	*	3%	8%

Note: Totals exceed 100% due to multiple mentions of pregnancy-related topics in a single article. Articles mentioning pregnancy are a subset of both sexual health and other sexual articles.

sion of abortion subtopics. The few articles that did include mention of abortion appeared in the context of clinic violence, general access to abortion, abortion decision-making, legislative and judicial policy, the social consequences of abortion, and male responsibility in abortion decision-making.

Teen Magazines. There was no article coded that focused primarily on abortion among the sample of the teen magazine issues reviewed, and only one article mentioned abortion-related topics. That one article discussed decision-making about whether to have an abortion, the social and emotional consequences of having an abortion and female responsibility for making abortion decisions.

Coverage of Sexually Transmitted Diseases Other than HIV/AIDS

Women's Magazines. Mention of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) other than HIV/AIDS was fairly infrequent in the current-year sample of women's magazines: overall, 2 percent of all articles coded focused primarily on STDs other than HIV. Four STDs were mentioned by name in coverage mentioning STDs: chlamydia, hepatitis B, and trichomoniasis (6% of coverage mentioning STDs in general) and herpes (17%). However, two-thirds of articles containing any STD information mentioned non-specified STDs, suggesting that women's magazines may be likely to treat these diseases as a general phenomenon or problem, rather than specific diseases.

Another frequently cited STD-related topic was the risk of contraction, mentioned in almost four out of ten (39%) of the articles

containing any STD information. Prevention was also a focus in a third (33%) of STD coverage in women's magazines.

Men's Magazines. While articles that were mainly about STDs other than HIV accounted for just 3 percent of all coded articles in the men's magazine group, there appears to be references to several specific STDs, as well as a fairly broad range of STD-related top-

ics. Of the eight articles in the men's magazine group containing any information about STDs, six mentioned herpes. Half (50%) of these articles also mentioned STD prevention, the same percentage that mentioned treatment of STDs. Trichomoniasis was the only STD not specifically mentioned by name in at least one article making reference to STDs in the men's magazines studied.

Teen Magazines. In the teen magazines, two specific STDs — herpes and human papilloma virus or genital warts (both 15% of STD coverage) — were mentioned by name in articles including information about STDs other than HIV. Of the 13 articles containing any information about non-HIV STDs, all but one made mention of non-specific STDs, amounting to almost one-third of all coded articles (31%). Teen magazine coverage also occasionally included mentions of STD symptoms, prevention, and risk of contraction (15% of articles mentioning STDs).

A number of important STD-related topics were not mentioned in any of the articles in the issues of women's, men's or teen magazines reviewed for this study. These included the social, emotional and financial consequences of contracting an STD, female responsibility for preventing STDs (and only teen magazines mentioned male responsibility), or the fact that having an STD may increase one's risk of contracting HIV.

Coverage of HIV/AIDS

Women's Magazines. Women's magazine coverage of HIV/AIDS largely focused on sexual transmission. More than half (57%) of articles including any information about HIV/AIDS wrote about sexual transmission; 16 percent discussed non-sexual transmission. A broad range of HIV-related topics from testing and treatment to prevention were mentioned in women's magazine coverage of HIV. One in four (27%) articles

Table 8 Mentions of Abortion and Related Topics in Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazines

Abortion and Related Topics	Women's		Men's		Teen	
	% of ALL coded articles n=327	% of articles mentioning abortion n=25	% of ALL coded articles n=96	% of articles mentioning abortion n=4	% of ALL coded articles n=39	% of articles mentioning abortion n=1
Surgical Abortion	3%	32%	*	*	3%	100%
Mifepristone	1%	7%	*	*	*	*
Mifepristone/RU-486	2%	14%	*	*	*	*
Late-term Abortion	*	*	*	*	*	*
Clinic Violence	3%	36%	2%	40%	*	*
General Access	2%	25%	1%	20%	*	*
Rate of Abortion	*	4%	*	*	*	*
Decision-making	5%	46%	2%	40%	3%	100%
Health Risks	2%	18%	*	*	*	*
Health Benefits	1%	11%	*	*	*	*
Legislative/Judicial Policy	2%	21%	2%	40%	*	*
Emotional Consequences	4%	36%	*	*	3%	100%
Social Consequences	1%	7%	1%	20%	3%	100%
Financial Implications	2%	14%	*	*	*	*
Female Responsibility	2%	14%	*	*	3%	100%
Male Responsibility	*	4%	1%	20%	*	*
As Contraception	2%	14%	*	*	*	*
As Murder	2%	18%	*	*	*	*

Note: Totals exceed 100% due to multiple mentions of abortion-related topics in a single article. Articles mentioning abortion are a subset of both sexual health and other sexual articles.

Table 9 Mentions of STDs Other than HIV/AIDS in Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazines

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) Non-HIV/AIDS	Women's		Men's		Teen	
	% of ALL coded articles n=327	% of articles mentioning STDs n=18	% of ALL coded articles n=96	% of articles mentioning STDs n=8	% of ALL coded articles n=39	% of articles mentioning STDs n=13
Chlamydia	*	6%	2%	25%	*	*
Gonorrhea	*	*	3%	38%	*	*
Hepatitis B	*	6%	1%	13%	*	*
Herpes	1%	17%	6%	75%	5%	15%
HPV	*	*	1%	13%	5%	15%
PID	*	6%	*	*	*	*
Syphilis	*	*	3%	38%	*	*
Trichomoniasis	*	6%	*	*	*	*
Non-Specific	5%	67%	3%	38%	31%	92%

Note: Totals exceed 100% due to multiple mentions of specific STDs in a single article. Articles mentioning STDs are a subset of both sexual health and other sexual articles.

Table 10 Mentions of STD-Related Topics in Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazines

STD-Related Topics	Women's		Men's		Teen	
	% of ALL coded articles n=327	% of articles mentioning STDs n=18	% of ALL coded articles n=96	% of articles mentioning STDs n=8	% of ALL coded articles n=39	% of articles mentioning STDs n=13
Prevention	2%	33%	3%	50%	5%	15%
Symptoms	1%	11%	2%	25%	5%	15%
Treatment	1%	17%	5%	50%	3%	8%
Health Consequences	2%	22%	1%	13%	*	*
Rate of Spread	1%	11%	*	*	3%	8%
Risk	3%	39%	2%	25%	5%	15%
Enhancement of HIV Risk	*	*	*	*	*	*
Emotional Consequences	*	*	*	*	*	*
Social Consequences	*	*	*	*	*	*
Financial Consequences	*	*	*	*	*	*
Female Responsibility	*	*	*	*	*	*
Male Responsibility	*	*	*	*	3%	8%

Note: Totals exceed 100% due to multiple mentions of STD-related topics in a single article. Articles mentioning STDs are a subset of both sexual health and other sexual articles.

wrote about HIV testing, and both rates of incidence and prevention of the spread of the disease through condom use were cited in articles about HIV/AIDS in approximately one out of every five instances (19% for both topics).

Men's Magazines. HIV/AIDS coverage was the most often covered sexual health topic looked at in men's magazines. Overall, 14 percent of all sex-related coverage focused primarily on HIV/AIDS — more than twice as many articles as primarily focused on any other individual sexual health topic.

A variety of HIV/AIDS-related topics were mentioned in coverage about the disease in men's magazines. One out of every two articles mentioning HIV/AIDS included information about the risk of getting the disease (50%). Treatment was another often cited subtopic — also in half of these articles. Both education (25% of articles mentioning HIV/AIDS) and the use of condoms (20%) were frequently mentioned in men's magazines as means of prevention.

Four out of ten men's magazine articles mentioning HIV/AIDS discussed sexual transmission; three out ten mentioned non-sexual transmission, such as IV-drug use or a blood transfusion.

Teen Magazines. In teen magazines, more than a third (38%) of articles mentioning HIV/AIDS wrote about the risk of getting HIV/AIDS. All mentions of HIV/AIDS (100%) focused on sexual transmission of the disease, as opposed to non-sexual transmission routes.

Coverage of Other Sexual (Non-Sexual Health) Topics

The amount of editorial magazines devoted to sexual topics other than sexual health was reviewed and coded for to provide context for the amount of attention given to articles mostly about sexual health issues. This coverage was also

examined for mentions of sexual health topics — such as, contraception or sexually transmitted diseases. As was noted earlier, significant proportions of coverage with any sexual focus in all three magazine types included at least mention of important sexual health issues. The following section provides more information about the nature of coverage mostly about sexual issues other than sexual health.

Women's Magazines. As in both the other magazine types studied, general sexual activity was the non-sexual health topic most often mentioned in the women's magazines — in more than half (56%) of all coded articles. The second most frequently covered non-sexual health topic was sexual acts or techniques, mentioned in a third (34%) of all articles coded. Other common topics were sex appeal (28%), the lack of desire for sex (18%), and sexual fantasies (16%).

Men's Magazines. Almost half (47%) of all articles coded made reference to specific sexual acts or techniques in men's magazines. General sexual activity was the most often mentioned non-sexual health topic (in 52 percent of all coded articles). Other common non-sexual health topics mentioned in men's magazine coverage were: sexual appeal, mentioned in about one in five (22%) of all coded articles; sexual fantasy, 20 percent; and masturbation, 16 percent.

Teen Magazines. In teen magazines, the most commonly mentioned other sexual (that is, non-sexual health) topic — other than general sexual activity, which was mentioned in nearly half (49%) of all coded articles — was decision-making about whether to have sex. One of every three (39%) coded articles wrote about sexual decision-making. Other common non-sexual health topics mentioned in teen magazines were: virginity (18% of all coded articles); rape, sexual abuse, or incest (15%); and casual sex (10%).

Causes and Solutions

The extent to which possible causes of — or solutions to — sexual health problems were discussed in magazines' coverage of sexual health topics was also examined in this study. (No attempt was

made to separate causes from solutions because one virtually always implies the other. For instance, if more frequent use of condoms is cited as a way of preventing the spread of HIV, that implies that failure to use condoms is contributing to the spread of the disease.) Table 13 shows the percentages of sexual health articles that

mentioned various factors as possible causes or solutions.

Women's Magazines. In women's magazines, one-third of articles mostly about sexual health issues mentioned individual behavior as the cause of or solution to a sexual health problem. One in three (32%) sexual health articles also mention health professionals as a cause or solution. Science and technology are also commonly discussed as causes or solutions to sexual health problems, in one out of every four (25%) articles on sexual health. Partner communication, government agencies or policy, families, and schools or education were also mentioned, but less frequently.

Men's Magazines. Health professionals were mentioned as causes of or solutions to a sexual health issue in almost half (48%) of the sexual health articles in the men's magazines. Science and technology were mentioned in more than half (52%) of these articles. About one of every four (24%) articles primarily about a sexual health topic mentioned individual behavior as a cause or solution.

Teen Magazines. In teen magazines, more than two out five (44%) articles mostly about a sexual health topic mentioned individual behavior as a cause or solution, and about one in every five (19%) articles mentioned communication (or lack of communication) with one's sex partner as a potential cause or solution. Health professionals and science/technology also were mentioned, but government agencies or policies, family, and schools or education were generally

not mentioned as either contributing to or helping to solve reproductive and sexual health problems.

Discussion of Impact on Various Groups

Sexual health articles were coded for whether a particular group was presented as being primarily affected by the issue of focus, for

Table 11: Mentions of HIV/AIDS-Related Topics in Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazines

HIV/AIDS-Related Topics	Women's		Men's		Teen	
	% of ALL coded articles n=327	% of articles mentioning HIV/AIDS n=37	% of ALL coded articles n=96	% of articles mentioning HIV/AIDS n=20	% of ALL coded articles n=39	% of articles mentioning HIV/AIDS n=8
Sexual Transmission	8%	57%	9%	40%	21%	100%
Non-Sexual Transmission	2%	16%	7%	30%	*	*
Condoms for Prevention	3%	19%	5%	20%	3%	13%
Spermicides as Prevention	1%	5%	*	*	*	*
Abstinence as Prevention	1%	8%	*	*	*	*
Education as Prevention	2%	14%	6%	25%	3%	13%
Testing	4%	27%	5%	20%	3%	13%
Treatment	2%	11%	11%	50%	*	*
Legislative/Judicial Policy	1%	5%	1%	5%	*	*
Rates	2%	19%	6%	25%	*	*
Risk	2%	16%	11%	50%	8%	38%
Emotional Consequences	2%	14%	2%	10%	3%	13%
Social Consequences	1%	5%	*	*	*	*
Financial Consequences	*	*	*	*	3%	13%
Female Responsibility	2%	14%	1%	5%	*	*
Male Responsibility	1%	11%	1%	5%	*	*

Note: Totals exceed 100% due to multiple mentions of HIV/AIDS-related topics in a single article. Articles mentioning HIV/AIDS are a subset of both sexual health and other sexual articles.

Table 12: Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazines: Mentions of Other Sexual (Non-Sexual Health) Topics

Other Sexual (Non-Sexual Health) Topics	Women's		Men's		Teen	
	% of ALL coded articles n=327	% of articles mentioning other sexual topics n=212	% of ALL coded articles n=96	% of articles mentioning other sexual topics n=77	% of ALL coded articles n=39	% of articles mentioning other sexual topics n=30
General Sexual Activity	56%	72%	52%	66%	49%	63%
Lack of Desire for Sex	18%	23%	7%	8%	3%	3%
Coital Sex	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%	3%
Virginity	3%	5%	*	1%	18%	23%
Masturbation	8%	11%	16%	18%	3%	3%
Sexual Dysfunction	9%	12%	14%	16%	*	*
Sexual Fantasies	16%	21%	20%	27%	*	*
Sex Appeal	28%	43%	22%	27%	5%	7%
Sexual Techniques	34%	44%	47%	62%	*	*
Casual Sex	14%	19%	10%	13%	10%	13%
Monogamy	15%	19%	14%	16%	5%	7%
Extramarital Affairs	12%	15%	7%	8%	3%	3%
Cybersex	2%	4%	9%	10%	*	*
Prostitution	4%	5%	9%	10%	*	*
Pornography	4%	5%	12%	16%	*	*
Rape/Sexual Abuse/Incest	5%	8%	4%	5%	15%	20%
Alcohol/Drug Use and Sex	4%	5%	2%	4%	8%	10%
Sexual Decision-making	8%	12%	8%	10%	39%	50%
Sexual Orientation	8%	12%	9%	12%	3%	3%

Note: Totals exceed 100% due to multiple mentions of other sexual topics in a single article. Articles mentioning sexual activity and other sexual topics are a subset of both sexual health and other sexual articles.

example, whether unintended pregnancy was presented as largely a teen problem. The following table shows the percentages of articles in each magazine type that mentioned the impact on selected groups.

Overall, it appears that all three magazine types most often address the impact of the sexual health topic of focus in terms of their readers. That is, women's magazines mostly focused on women in general in their sexual health coverage (64% of sexual health articles coded), men's magazines on men in general (84%), and teen magazines on teenage girls (50%). However, all three magazine types studied did include noteworthy emphasis on the other gender: one in five (21%) sexual health articles in women's magazines mentioned the impact on men in general; three out five (60%) sexual health articles in men's magazines mentioned the impact on women in general; and nearly a third (31%) of sexual health articles in teen magazines mentioned teen boys. Teen magazines were most likely to mention the impact on the reader herself — half of all sexual health articles mentioned the impact on "self." Among women's magazines, 10 percent of sexual health articles mentioned the reader, and less than 1 percent of men's magazine articles did.

Referrals for More Information

Women's Magazines. The referral most often included in sexual health coverage in women's magazines was for additional printed materials, such as a book or brochure (15% of sexual health articles). Expert organizations with phone and/or address noted, or an "Ask your doctor" suggestion were each included in about 7 percent of these articles.

Men's Magazines. Men's magazines relatively infrequently included additional referrals for more information along with sexual health coverage. The most common resource suggested was an expert organization readers could write or call (16% of sexual health coverage).

Teen Magazines. Teen magazines appear to include additional

Table 13 Select Agents as Causes or Solutions in Sexual Health Coverage in Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazines

Agents	Women's n=98	Men's n=25	Teen n=16
Individual Behavior	33%	24%	44%
Partner Communication	7%	4%	19%
Govt. Policy/Agencies	14%	8%	*
Health Professionals	32%	48%	6%
Science or Technology	25%	52%	6%
Families	7% *	*	*
Schools/Education	3%	*	*
Other Social Entities (i.e. Churches, Media)	2%	*	*

Note: Totals exceed 100% due to multiple mentions in a single article.

Table 14 Impact on Various Groups in Sexual Health Coverage

Groups Impacted	Women's n=98	Men's n=25	Teen n=16
Women in General	64%	60%	13%
Men in General	21% *	84%	6%
Teenage Girls	9%	*	50%
Teenage Boys	3%	*	31%
Self — The Reader	10%	*	50%

Note: Totals exceed 100% due to multiple mentions in a single article.

Table 15 Referrals for More Information in Sexual Health Coverage in Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazines

Referrals	Women's n=98	Men's n=25	Teen n=16
Expert Organization (with Phone/Address)	7%	16%	25%
Medical Non-specific (i.e. Ask your doctor)	7%	*	19%
Mentor/Adult (i.e. Talk to your parent)	3%	*	13%
Bibliography/Printed Materials	15%	4%	6%
Other	1%	*	*

Note: Totals may exceed 100% due to multiple mentions in a single article.

Table 16 Type of Coverage of Sexual Health Topics in Women's, Men's, and Teen Magazines

Type of Coverage	Women's n=98	Men's n=25	Teen n=16
Feature	43%	20%	19%
Q&A/Advice	8%	4%	56%
News Mention	36%	60%	*
Columns	6%	4%	6%
Editorial	*	*	*
Letters to the Editor	8% *	*	19%
Other	*	12%	*
Total	100%	100%	100%

Note: Total may not equal 100% due to rounding.

resources and referrals fairly frequently with sexual health coverage. One quarter (25%) of all teen magazine coverage of sexual health issues included an outside referral to an expert organization, including phone number and/or address. One out of five (19%) encouraged seeking expert medical opinion, such as suggesting to readers to "Ask your doctor," and 13 percent suggested talking to a parent or another adult mentor.

Type of Coverage

To understand more about the scope of coverage magazines devote to sexual health issues, as well as what prompts that coverage, sexual health articles were coded in terms of type of coverage, for example, feature piece, regular column, news mention, Q&A, editorial, and letter to the editor. Table 16 shows that the three magazine types studied differed significantly in their patterns of use of various types of editorial articles.

Women's Magazines. In women's magazines, sexual health articles were most likely to be feature articles (43%), followed by news mentions, which accounted for a little more than a third (36%) of sexual health coverage. These two formats accounted for the vast majority of coverage.

Men's Magazines. Two out of every five (60%) articles focusing primarily on sexual health in men's magazines were categorized as news mentions, generally suggesting that the piece was prompted by a current news event and was relatively brief. About one in five (20%) sexual health articles were feature pieces.

Teen Magazines. The majority (56%) of sexual health articles in teen magazines appeared in a

question-and-answer or advice column format. Approximately one in five of these articles (19%) were feature articles, and an equal percentage appeared in letters to the editor.

Across all magazine types, sexual health articles that focused mostly on pregnancy or abortion were most likely to be feature articles. Articles about contraception or HIV/AIDS were most

likely to be news mentions, while those focusing on other sexually transmitted diseases were most likely to be either feature articles or question-and-answer columns.

Sources

The study also examined the average number of sources — medical, other expert, “person on the street,” etc. — in sexual health coverage. The following section reports on the average number of different kinds of sources mentioned in articles of varying length and depth in each of the magazine types. Because the data has been averaged across all articles the actual range of sources included within a specific type of article may be considerably higher, such as in a feature piece, or non-existent in a brief news mention.

Women's Magazines. Women's magazines, on average, included a quote from at least one expert source in every article relating to sexual health. A “person-on-the-street” comment was also generally included in most sexual health coverage. Expert organizations, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or Planned Parenthood Federation of America were cited in a quarter of these articles.

Men's Magazines. Men's magazines infrequently included comment from experts or the average person in sexual health articles. This may be explained by the fact that most sexual health coverage was in the form of shorter news mentions, as opposed to feature pieces that would allow for more depth of coverage. On the other hand, men's magazines cited expert organizations fairly frequently in their sexual health coverage, citing them in almost three out of ten (29%) articles.

Teen Magazines. “Person-on-the-street” comments averaged out to be included at least once in sexual health coverage in teen magazines. As with the men's magazines, this may be a factor of the format of much of teen magazines' coverage of sexual issues — more than one out of two are Q&A. Teen magazines cited an expert organization, such as Planned Parenthood, in four out of ten sexual health articles.

Writer Identification

Information was collected and recorded about the authors of the sexual health articles based on information provided either within

the article itself or on the magazine's masthead. In all three magazine types, many of the authors were unable to be coded based on information provided.

Women's Magazines. A combination of staff writers (16%) and freelancers (12%) were the most commonly identifiable authors

of sexual health coverage in women's magazines. Approximately one in five sexual health articles were written by a medical or public health expert (13%) or someone identified specifically as a medical writer (10%).

Men's Magazines. Writer credentials were rarely available in men's magazine sexual health coverage. Among identifiable authors, freelancers were most common, accounting for 16 percent of coded articles focusing mostly on a sexual health topic.

Teen Magazines. In teen magazines, the most commonly identifiable author of the sexual health coverage was a staff writer, amounting to about a third (31%) of the sexual health articles coded. Teen magazines also appeared to rely fairly heavily on personal accounts, which accounted for about one in five (19%) sexual health articles.

Table 17 Sources in Sexual Health Coverage in Women's, Men's and Teen Magazines

Sources	Women's n=98	Men's n=25	Teen n=16
Average Number of People Quoted per Sexual Health Article			
Medical Expert	1.2	0.3	0.2
Other Expert	0.3	0.1	0.1
“Person on the Street”	0.6	0.2	0.5
Other	0.4	*	*
Percent of Sexual Health Articles that Mentioned an Expert Organization			
Expert Organization	25% *	29%	40%

Table 18 Writer Identification Associated with Sexual Health Coverage in Women's, Men's and Teen Magazines

Type of Writer	Women's n=98	Men's n=25	Teen n=16
Staff Writer	16%	*	31%
Freelancer	12%	16%	19%
Medical Writer	10%	8%	*
Medical/Health/Other Expert	13%	*	*
“Real Person”	8%	*	19%
Other	2%	*	*
No Description	38%	76%	31%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Note: Total may not equal 100% due to rounding.

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Single copies of the final report of this research are available free-of-charge by calling the Kaiser Family Foundation's publications request line at 1 (800) 656-4533. A companion study of focus groups with magazine readers will also be included. (Ask for publication #1258).

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